

PEACE

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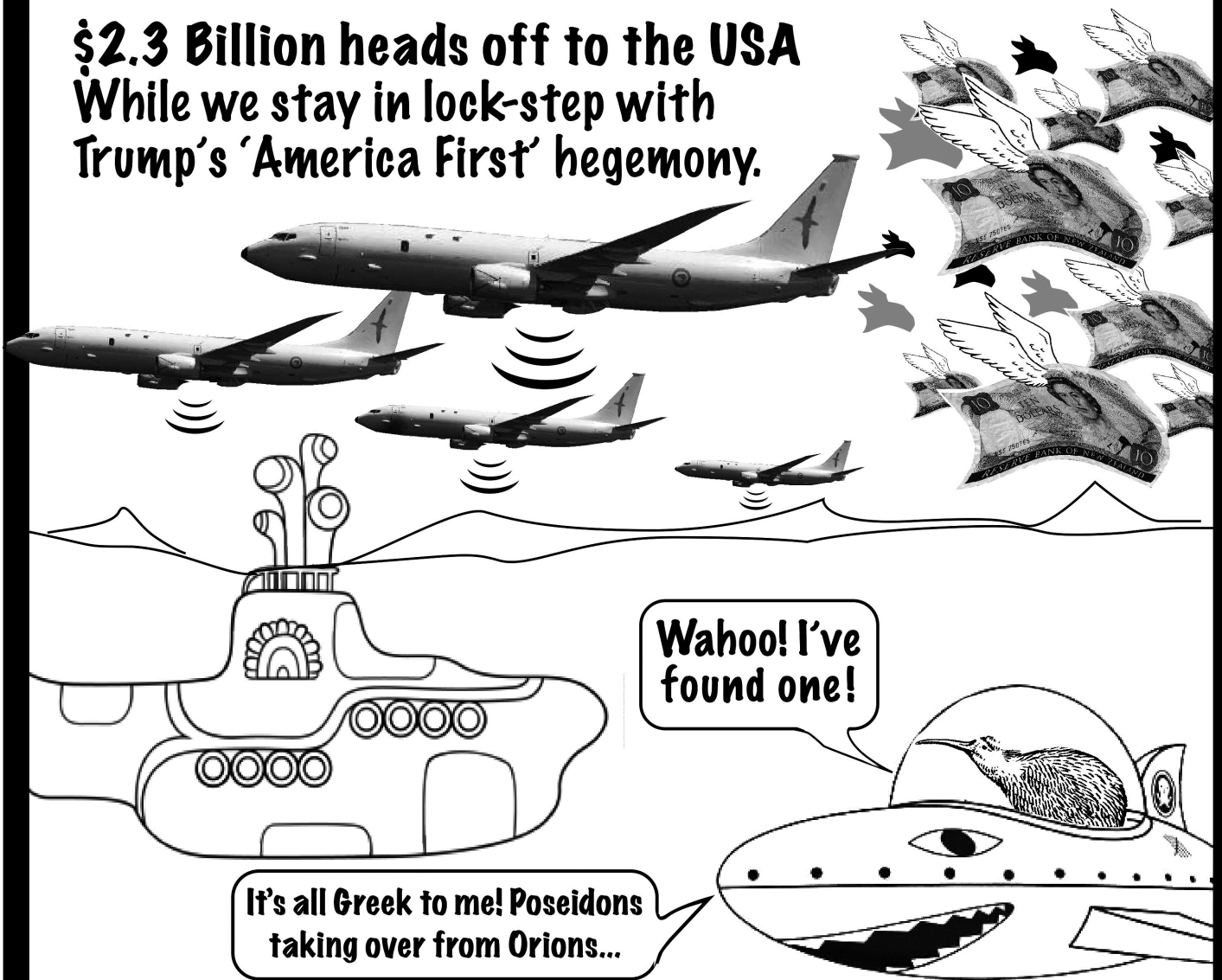
RESEARCHER

Journal of the Anti-Bases Campaign

November 2018

Number 56

\$2.3 Billion heads off to the USA
While we stay in lock-step with
Trump's 'America First' hegemony.



IN BED WITH UNCLE SAM

In this issue: Spies; Geopolitics; West Papua; 'In The Shadows Of The American Century'; Omega Campaign & Maori Loans Affair Remembered

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NZ Creeping More Into The Embrace Of The US Military

- Keith Locke

With so many New Zealanders rejecting Donald Trump's maverick "America First" foreign policy, you expect the Labour/NZ First government to be keeping its distance. In fact, the opposite is happening. New Zealand is becoming more operationally involved in the American war machine. The involvement in the Afghan War continues, even if New Zealand's troop contingent remains a token one.

There is still a significant contingent of NZ military trainers in Iraq. In both countries the New Zealand military presence constitutes an endorsement of America's military policies, which have proved destructive and divisive. Our country would be better off devoting its resources to reconstruction aid in Afghanistan and Iraq, and promoting the peaceful resolution of factional conflict.

It is in the Pacific that New Zealand is getting more directly involved on the side of the Western alliance, and upsetting China, despite China being our main trading partner. This involvement is reflected in the exercises and operations New Zealand joins in, as well as in weapons' procurement. Back in 2016 China expressed its concern about New Zealand participating in the "Bersama Shield" exercise in the South China Sea, alongside the navies of Britain, Australia, Singapore and Malaysia. China saw this exercise as provocative, in the context of a dispute between Malaysia and China over who owns the Spratly islands.

However, this did not stop New Zealand sending the frigate Te Mana to the October 2018 Bersama Lima exercise, also in the South China Sea. Expect further Chinese criticism. Beyond exercises, New Zealand has become **operationally** involved with the US military in the western Pacific. Early in 2017 the frigate Te Kaha put itself under the authority of the USS Nimitz task force, replacing the USS Fitzgerald, which had been damaged in a collision with a Philippine container ship.

Te Kaha's operational involvement with the task force has now ended. But in September 2018 it was announced that an NZ Orion would be sent to a US airbase in Okinawa (Japan) to conduct surveillance for the Americans on (mainly Chinese) ships sailing to or from North Korea. The cover story was that the Orions would be helping monitor the implementation of UN sanctions. But, clearly, they will be monitoring the much tougher and comprehensive American sanctions.

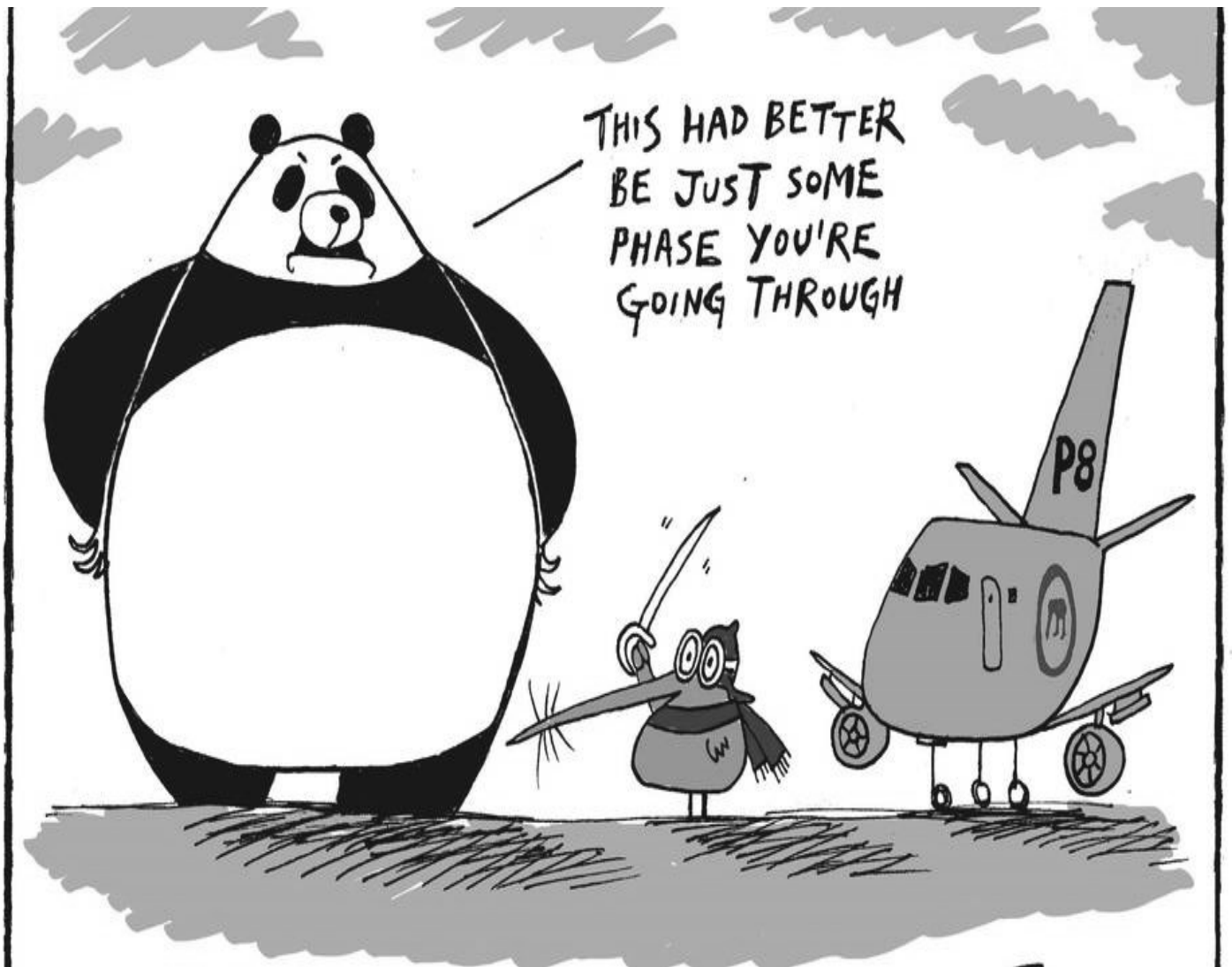
China won't be happy with this deployment of one of our Orions, and they will be even less pleased if a Chinese merchant ship is stopped and searched by the US Navy as a result of this surveillance. Nor will China be happy if such a ship, first identified by our Orion, is subsequently prevented from visiting a US port.

\$2.3 Billion For Four War Planes

We can expect further such integration into US operations as a result of the new equipment now being procured by the NZ Defence Force. In July 2018 Defence Minister Ron Mark announced the \$2.3 billion purchase of four P8

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NZ Herald, 1.7.18

aircraft, optimised to detect and fight submarines - read Chinese submarines. Big play was made of how the surveillance systems, communications platforms and weapons targeting systems on the P8s would be interoperable with similar planes purchased by the US and Australian navies.

As well as getting New Zealand further offside with China, this purchase was a huge waste of money as there are plenty of planes with high technical specifications for ocean surface surveillance (as opposed to sub-surface surveillance) that can be purchased for less than \$100 million. As a further downside, the P8s will spend so much time on overseas exercises with Five Eyes partners, or on US-led missions, that they will be less available for what we really need, which is fisheries patrols and search and rescue over our EEZ (exclusive economic

zone), the Southern Ocean and in the South Pacific.

This greater military alignment with the Americans is backed up by the Government's Strategic Defence Policy Statement, issued in July 2018. It portrays China as a threat, warning of that nation's "ability to quickly deploy a range of additional capabilities in and around key international shipping lanes". The Policy Statement backs "the maintenance of international rules-based order", a theme repeated by Prime Minister Ardern at the UN General Assembly in September 2018. But, as we know, US President Donald Trump opposes such a rules-based order. Why then are we backing the US militarily against China?

Truly Independent Foreign Policy Needed

I'm not saying we should go the other way and back China against the

United States, particularly as China has many faults and is a one-party State. However, on several issues, including support for the UN, action on climate change, the Iranian nuclear deal, trade, Palestinian issues, the peaceful resolution of disputes, opposition to Western intervention in the Middle East, China's stance is better than that of America. Surely, New Zealand would be better off with a truly independent foreign policy, taking a more "non-aligned" stance in relation to the stand-off between the US and China, working with each power on the merits of each situation, and helping to mediate conflicts where necessary. □

SPOOKY BITS

- Warren Thomson

NZ Continues To Grovel To The Big Bullies

The PM has confirmed New Zealand will extend its deployment to Iraq, but "only" until June 2019, when the current training programme will finish. The joint training mission with Australia started in 2015 as part of the US-led Operation Inherent Resolve, and has trained more than 30,000 members of the Iraqi security forces (RNZ, 17/9/18). Exactly what kind of training, and whether it involves dealing with "terrorism" is unclear.

Just over 140 New Zealand Defence Force personnel are currently part of the deployment, which were reduced to 121 from November 2018. RNZ reports (ibid) that most personnel are based at Taji Camp, but there are also three intelligence officers working out of Qatar. The information given out is completely silent over the role of personnel in Qatar, but it is likely that their activities involve tracking and targeting "hostiles".

The PM said the deployment would be reviewed again in early 2019, to assess New Zealand's options to contribute to stability in Iraq beyond June 2019. What "stability" she is talking about is also unclear. It is disheartening for those of us who would like to see NZ having an independent foreign policy to see how much the current Government is adopting a very conservative and subservient strategy, apparently based mostly on disinformation.

SIS Checks Canterbury Uni Office For Chinese Bugs

The NZ Security Intelligence Service (SIS) has been searching for bugs in the office of a New Zealand academic who believes she's being targeted over her work on China's increasing influence in New Zealand. University of Canterbury Pro-

fessor Anne-Marie Brady has said there have been attempts by Chinese officials to silence her by placing pressure on organisations at home and abroad, and that both her office and home have been burgled.

She noted while laptops - including one used for her work - had been taken during a break-in, other valuables were untouched, indicating the burglary was political rather than criminal. The *New Zealand Herald* has reported specialists from the SIS have carried out searches of Professor Brady's university office and home for listening devices, suggesting she may have been the possible target of espionage. The Police have been working on a related burglary investigation for seven months and are reported to have "positive lines of inquiry," according to the *Herald (Stuff, 20/9/18)*.

Inquiry Into Use Of Private Dicks Truncated

Revelations about the sinister activities of private company Thompson and Clark in spying on various protest groups for Government organisations has resulted in the State Services Commission setting up an inquiry. But the company's relationship with the Police has been excluded from the inquiry. In response,

Amnesty International and other groups have demanded the inquiry look into links between the controversial private investigation firm and the Police. Amnesty launched a petition asking for Police to be included in the inquiry.

Greenpeace leader Russel Norman says the inquiry should include Police because it was troubling if Police and Thompson & Clark were sharing information when surveillance carried out by Police was subject to oversight which didn't apply to a private company. Greenpeace was a victim of the company's insidious spying.

In an Official Information Act response to activist Valerie Morse in September 2018, Police confirmed they had received information about activist groups from Thompson & Clark over the previous four years. "During that time Thompson and Clark Investigations Ltd (TCIL) completed a number of reports on behalf of their commercial clients," says the response from the Police National Intelligence Centre. "When TCIL disseminated reporting to their clients they also shared some of that reporting with Police" (*Stuff, 19/9/18*).

A Canterbury earthquake insurance claimant who was the target of a taxpayer-funded spying operation carried out by Thompson & Clark also called for the Police to be included. "It was clear to me, via emails I have obtained, that (Thompson & Clark director Gavin) Clark's personal relationship with Police enabled him to 'pull strings' with the Police" (*Stuff, ibid.*).



University of Canterbury Professor Anne-Marie Brady

Peace Researcher (PR) has reported previously about Thompson and Clark's spying on protest groups, and its habit of slagging off protesters in its reports. A full investigation into its activities is long overdue, and it should include its relationship with the SIS as well as the Police. *PRs 34, July 2007, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/pr-backissues/pr34.pdf> and 35, December 2007, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/pr-backissues/pr35.pdf>* ran extensive material on Thompson and Clark's private political spying. Specifically, see Mark Eden's "The Privatisation Of Spying, Part 2", in *PR 35. Ed.*

How Little Our PM Knows About Our Spooks

In October 2018, our Prime Minister spoke to the media expressing her abhorrence of cyber warfare. She stated her belief that NZ should "call out behaviour like cyber security attacks, when they occur" (*Press*, 5/10/18). It is both sad and alarming that Jacinda is so completely ignorant of the activities of NZ spooks. NZ's Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) is up to its eyeballs in Five Eyes activities which are hugely committed to cyber warfare (see items below).

The Leader of the Opposition, Simon Bridges, made similarly naïve comments. In 2015 the *Guardian* reported that new documents from US National Security Agency (NSA) whistle-blower Edward Snowden revealed that Australia's defence intelligence agency had sent an officer to work with the GCSB to help them develop their cyber capabilities and lead a new operational unit (*Guardian*, 10/3/15)

Washington Expands "Offensive" Cyber Operations

Trump has authorised a new policy that gives the Pentagon and other agencies more scope to undertake cyber warfare operations and oppose foreign governments' attempts to target US networks. This is part of a "deterrence" structure that aims to respond to threats by responding with greater destructive force, the cyber equivalent of mutually assured destruction (*the appropriately*

named MAD, of the Cold War nuclear arms race days. Ed.)

The new policy was announced by far Right National Security Advisor John Bolton, who gave no details about what kind of activities would be undertaken (*Washington Post*, reported in the *Press*, 22/9/18). Former senior Pentagon cyber official Kate Charlet said the wider use of cyber operations is part of "defending forward, confronting threats before they reach US networks" (*Washington Post*, *ibid.*).

Other former officials said that, in the past, the Americans did not have a lot of options for strong response. But Bolton obviously has not changed from the George W Bush Presidency days of his ultra-belligerent nuclear deterrence strategies, so the concern must be that the world is now in the throes of a cyber weaponry arms race where Cybergeddon may be even harder to contain than nuclear warfare.

Huge Increase In UK Cyber Warfare

The British Ministry of Defence and Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) is to significantly increase its ability to wage war in cyberspace, justifying the decision by citing a growing cyber threat from Russia and the need to fight Islamic State (ISIS). The plan involves the creation of a new offensive (in both senses of the word) cyber force of up to 2,000 personnel.

This new force would represent an enormous increase in manpower focused on cyber operations and will receive at least £250m in funding. A former British commander responsible for military cyber operations, is quoted by *Sky News* (21/9/18) as stating that enhancing the UK's ability to launch cyber-attacks is paramount at a time when countries such as Russia are already on the offensive. "By adopting offensive cyber techniques in the UK, we are levelling the playing field and providing new means of both deterring and punishing states that wish to do us harm," he said.

According to the GCHQ, the UK now has twice the power to deliver

cyberattacks than it did prior to 2014, with the ability to deliver "devastating infrastructure attacks". GCHQ told the British Parliament Intelligence and Security Committee in December 2017 that it has "actually over-achieved and delivered almost double the number of capabilities we were aiming for... It is the full spectrum of capabilities from tactical stuff... right through to what we would say is the high end of counter state offensive cyber capabilities" [*Computer Business Review*, 21/12/17).

The GCHQ has been carrying out extensive cyber operations against Islamic State. David Cameron, as Prime Minister, instructed his spy agencies and the armed forces at the start of 2016 to go after the ISIS media machine. Britain, the United States and allies launched a series of secret cyber operations using malware to block access to data, placing fake stories to create confusion and targeting ISIS financing (*Sky News Website*, *ibid.*).

This included disrupting ISIS funding and logistics to make it harder for the group to pay its fighters and supply them with weapons, ammunition, food and other supplies. The Director of the GCHQ has claimed that these operations have made a significant contribution to Coalition efforts to suppress (ISIS) propaganda, undermining its offensives and hindered its ability to coordinate attacks, and protecting Coalition forces in the field.

GCHQ is reported to have worked with special forces to deploy cyber-attacks from laptops and handheld devices against ISIS commanders in Iraq and Syria to jam their ability to communicate electronically and lure them into traps by feeding false instructions over the Internet. The operations involve extensive cooperation amongst Five Eye members but how much NZ's GCSB and Special Air Service (SAS) are involved is unknown. The location of the new British organisation has yet to be agreed upon. It seems that the GCHQ and the military are finding it difficult to decide who should be in control.

Cyber Warfare Does Pose Real Threats

While *PR* focuses on the impending dangers of handing over control of Internet technology to clandestine operatives, the dangers of attacks on infrastructure and democratic values by those who are hostile to Western values is confronting. According to the *Guardian*, both the US and the UK governments fear that attacks on computer networks will become the most devastating form of future warfare.

“The first known, and perhaps the most successful of these, was the joint US/Israeli Stuxnet attack on the Iranian nuclear programme in 2009. Since then there has been increasing evidence of attacks of this sort by Russia – against Estonia in 2009, and then against Ukraine, where tens of thousands of attacks on everything from power supplies to voting machines have opened an under-reported front in an under-reported war” (*Guardian* Editorial, 22/1/18).

The *Guardian* also cites the case of a teenage hacker, Kane Gamble, operating from his bedroom in Leicestershire, who managed to impersonate the director of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Deputy Director of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and gain access to part of their emails, which included a great deal of classified material.

Finally, the newspaper states that North Korean State hackers are blamed by Western intelligence services for the WannaCry ransomware attacks which, in 2017, shut down several National Health Service hospitals in the UK. Persistent reports suggest the US has interfered in this way with North Korea’s nuclear missile programme (*Guardian* Editorial, *ibid.*).

In other cases, the British government’s National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has directly accused Russian military intelligence of cyber-attacks in 2016, hacking into the US Democratic National Committee headquarters. They identified other cyber-attacks as Russian-sourced: an October 2017 attack through BadRabbit ransomware that rendered information technology (IT)

inoperable, causing disruption to the Kiev Metro and Odessa Airport in Ukraine, plus Russia’s central bank and two Russian media outlets (*Guardian*, 4/10/18).

UK Democracy Deemed At Risk

An 89-page British Parliamentary Committee report about fake news, data targeting, Cambridge Analytica, Facebook and Russian interference “will come to be seen as a watershed moment in the history of Silicon Valley” according to the *Observer* (28/7/18), which says “the entire structure and machinery and future of our democracy (is) on trial”.

The report gave examples of ads used by ‘Vote Leave’ on Facebook to influence the Brexit result. Vote Leave is alleged to have won the British referendum on the European Union by running a disinformation campaign and the report warns the UK’s democracy is at risk from misinformation and online abuse. The Chair of the Committee said many of the connections traced led back to Russia. He blasted “Facebook’s complete lack of moral responsibility” (*Observer*, *ibid.*). As well, the report is said to be a comprehensive critique damning all of the social media companies.

The Committee’s report has a set of demands for new regulations, legislation, codes of ethics and Police investigations. It calls for “algorithmic auditing” for the heavily guarded secrets of the tech companies’ “black boxes” to be smashed open (*ibid.*). However, *PR* notes that Government access to technology companies’ algorithms is not the answer. Anti-Bases Campaign totally rejects any “reforms” that result in Government agencies having free access to private communications. Five Eyes already has far too much intrusion into communications.

GCHQ Spying On Friends Confirmed

British spies probably hacked into Belgium’s biggest telecommunications operator for more than two years, with the connivance of UK ministers, a confidential report by Belgian prosecutors says. The federal prosecutors’ report suggests

the hackers closed their operation within a matter of minutes of being exposed by Edward Snowden in August 2013. The British spies targeted the computers of Belgacom employees working in security and maintenance with faked LinkedIn messages. There was a particular focus on the Belgian company’s subsidiary unit, Belgacom International Carrier Services, which handles phone and data traffic in Africa and the Middle East.

The interception would have provided access to communications at North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) headquarters in Brussels and at key European institutions including the European Commission, European Parliament, and the European Council. The story appeared in the *Guardian* (21/9/18), reporting on “unconfirmed reports in the Belgian media”, and stating that Belgian officials said the story was “too sensitive” to comment on.

At the end of October 2018 it was reported that Belgian authorities believe: “For at least two years ending in 2013, the British intelligence service was probably spying within the (Belgian) State-owned company’s networks on the instruction of UK Ministers.... The GCHQ operation, if proven, would be the first documented example of an EU member state covertly hacking into the critical infrastructure of another” (*Guardian*, 25/10/18). Britain’s refusal to cooperate in an investigation is causing an international incident, and raises the question about how much spying Five Eyes agencies do on their friends.

Intelligence Dirty Tricks On Display

A current court case in Australia highlights two of the more unsavoury activities carried out by Australian spooks: the case involves raiding the offices of a leading Australian lawyer using anti-terrorism legislation, and, even more importantly, the classic type of spying carried out by Five Eyes’ operatives in their operations to control economic and political events.

The whistle-blower, a former Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) officer who was supposed to

be the star witness for Timor Leste in a bitter dispute over \$A40 billion in oil and gas revenue, is facing criminal prosecution. Deprived of his passport, the ex-spy could not travel to The Hague to appear for Timor Leste before an international arbitration tribunal which is to rule on whether a treaty governing the share of oil and gas reserves in the Timor Sea should be annulled.

In 2013, Witness K was all set to give evidence about the bugging operation at The Hague when the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) raided his home and seized his passport. His lawyer, a leading Australian barrister, also had his premises raided, with the Government of the day using a piece of anti-terrorism legislation to raid his chambers and Witness K's home. "I doubt that any judicial officer in Canberra would have signed that search warrant. And they knew that, so they used the terrorist power to raid my chambers," he said (ABC, 29/6/18). Now the case is back in the Australian courts.

"The Australian government's prosecution of 'witness K', a former Australian Secret Intelligence Service employee who exposed ASIS' bugging of the Timor Leste Cabinet Room during negotiations over a gas and oil treaty in 2004 is clearly undemocratic. The bugging helped Australia to impose a division of resources which highly disadvantaged recently-independent Timor Leste, one of the poorest countries in our region," said Stephen Darley, spokesperson for the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN, 11/9/18).

The *Sydney Morning Herald* notes that the ex-spook "... is among a group of former and current spies angered by the espionage and broader cultural and workplace issues at Australia's highly secretive foreign spy service" (21/6/18). Such a case should get due attention in this country. It highlights again the undemocratic nature of "anti-terrorism" laws, and is a stark reminder that – all public relations news items to the contrary – Five Eyes spying is predicated on giving unfair advantage to the USA and its close allies in economic and political imperialism.

Australia's Secret Agencies Help China Spy On Australia

Cameras used to monitor security threats at a sensitive Australian military base and another outside the front entrance of the Canberra office complex that houses the Australian government's top lawyers, two federal departments focussed on national security and an Australian intelligence agency are made by two Chinese owned companies, Hikvision and Dahua who face long-standing accusations of spying on behalf of the Chinese government. They are the largest and the second-largest video surveillance companies in the world.

Similar equipment has been used to track ethnic minorities and political dissidents in China, and was recently banned in the US due to concerns they were creating a "surveillance network" among Federal agencies. An ABC (the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, not the Anti-Bases Campaign) investigation showed Hikvision and Dahua security cameras in use at every level of Australian government, from some of the most sensitive federal government agencies all the way down to suburban councils.

The most serious example was a Hikvision camera discovered at one of Australia's most classified defence facilities, RAAF Base Edinburgh in Adelaide. Edinburgh is regarded as the centre of the nation's military intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and electronic warfare capabilities. The cameras there have been replaced.

The Edinburgh discovery mirrors the controversy in the US in 2017, when the *Wall Street Journal* discovered Hikvision cameras installed at US Army bases and at the US Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan. The US government also promptly removed the cameras. The ABC also found a Dahua camera hanging directly above the entrance to a privately-owned office block in the Canberra suburb of Barton that hosts some of Australia's most classified agencies. The departments of Home Affairs and Attorney-General have offices there, as does Australia's anti-money laundering centre, the Australian Transaction Reports and

Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC), and an annex of one of Australia's six intelligence agencies — the Office of National Assessments.

Hikvision grew out of China's military surveillance wing and is partly owned by the Chinese government. China is making huge strides in the fields of facial and gait recognition software via advances in artificial intelligence, and using image recognition software and surveillance within its State to suppress religious minorities, according to Professor Toby Walsh, an Australian intelligence expert. There are also hundreds of thousands of Chinese surveillance cameras in houses, on street corners, in local council offices, at schools and universities, on buses, in shopping centres and thousands of other public spaces across Australia (ABC Website, 12/9/18).

Big Anti-Bases Victory In Okinawa

A staunch opponent of the planned relocation of a US military base on Okinawa has beaten the Government-backed candidate in local Governor elections. The new Governor, Denny Tamaki, who opposes any American base in Okinawa (southern Japan) wants the existing facility to close and for its personnel and hardware to be moved off the island altogether. Tamaki's father was a US Marine. The new Governor won the election on an anti-base platform and vowed to fight plans to move Futenma, the enormous current US Marine base, located in a built-up area, to a less populated site on the island's north-east coast.

In August 2018, 70,000 people gathered at a park in the state capital of Naha in pouring rain vowing to stop the planned relocation of the base. Opponents of the relocation said the plan to move US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma from a crowded neighbourhood to a less-populated coastal site would not only be an environmental debacle but also ignores local wishes to have the base moved from the island entirely.

Tamaki defeated a candidate backed by Japan's ruling coalition led by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe,

whose Government has been locked in a long battle against local residents over the future of Futenma. Tamaki's victory will anger the Pentagon, who regard the Futenma relocation as essential to its ability to respond to control of the South and East China seas.

Tamaki vowed to continue fighting against relocation of the US base from the crowded town of Ginowan to the less populated coastal region of Nago, which would put corals and dugongs, the endangered marine mammals, at risk, according to environmental activists. He is following in the steps of his predecessor, Takeshi Onaga, who had been an outspoken opponent of the relocation until his death in August 2018 which prompted the early gubernatorial election. In 2015, Onaga and the national Government filed rival lawsuits to try to resolve the issue, with the Supreme Court ruling in the Government's favour in 2016.

In August 2018, however, the Okinawan prefectural government with-

drew its approval for landfill work, effectively halting construction work, and setting up another potential legal showdown with the Tokyo government. The base's relocation was agreed more than two decades ago as a way of reducing the US military footprint on the island following an outcry over the 1995 abduction and rape of a 12-year-old girl by three American servicemen. Recently, another US sailor has been arrested in Okinawa on suspicion of rape, adding to local determination to rid the island of the marine base, and most Okinawans want the base to go.

The Futenma base, in the middle of a densely populated city of Ginowan, has attracted frequent complaints about crime, noise and the threat of aircraft accidents in an area close to homes and schools. In return for the relocation, Washington agreed to transfer about 8,000 troops and their dependents from Okinawa to Guam, Hawaii and other locations. About half of the 50,000

American troops in Japan are stationed on Okinawa.

Australians Building New Base For US War Machine

The *Times* reports that "Australia is to reopen a vast Pacific military base used by the United States in World War II as it seeks to counter Chinese expansionism in the region" (*Press*, 22/9/18). With the cooperation of Papua New Guinea, and the expenditure of tens of millions of dollars, the location on Manus Island, about 2,000 kilometres north of Darwin, will be redeveloped to service American and Australian warships. The intention is likely to be to have US ships permanently based in the new facility at Lombrum, according to the *Times*.

Ports in Papua New Guinea are already being developed by China, so the country is playing off both superpowers. The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting was held there in November 2018, with the Chinese President in attend-



Okinawa anti-bases protest, 2018

ance. At its WWII peak, Lombrum hosted hundreds of ships, four airfields, and a huge hospital. The current redevelopment is part of a major Australian military expansion aimed at countering China. More than 1,500 American marines are now based in Darwin, and the number will nearly double in 2020.

New US Bases In Argentina

The Pentagon is planning to set up new military bases in Argentina. The apparent aim is to counter Chinese influences in South America and re-establish Washington's control in a region where Leftist governments have been threatening "US interests". Chaotic Venezuela has been a target for Trump's antagonism and Bolivia and Ecuador have governments which show little interest in making America great. There have been Leftwing governments in Brazil (but the country swung wildly to the Right in its 2018 Presidential election).

In the past, Argentina was a long-time important regional ally. During the period 2003-15, however, the Presidents Kirchner, firstly Nestor (until 2007), and his wife, Cristina (until 2015), both pursued more independent and popular domestic and foreign policies. The present Trump Administration now appears to be attempting to re-establish a military foothold in the country. Following the election of President Mauricio Macri three years ago Argentina has swung back toward the US and its foreign policy objectives. Since 2015, the Argentinian military has had joint exercises with its US counterparts.

Moves are now underway for the US to build three new military bases in Argentina, at Neuquen, Misiones and Ushuaia. In 2009, Cristina Kirchner's Government gave approval for China to set up a satellite tracking system for space research. The facilities became operational in 2016. It is not coincidental the newly proposed US base in Neuquen is near the joint China-Argentine satellite tracking system (*Vanguard*, 26/8/18).

A Babe In The Five Eyes Woods

In August 2018, the Minister for GCSB and NZSIS, Andrew Little, attended a spooky meeting on Australia's Gold Coast, (amazing how often the spies get to meet at resorts). Little told *Morning Report* [RNZ, 30/8/18] that New Zealand is not immune to interference from foreign governments. A classic, and double-edged, understatement! But which governments are we victimised by?

Little said he has seen the official report into Russian interference into the US election. There was organised State-sponsored interference through artificial Facebook accounts and disseminating provocative news, he said. NZ is clearly up with the big boys. Presumably Little got a little pat on the head as well. He did admit there is no evidence of foreign interference in New Zealand yet, but said it is a risk.

After the meetings in Australia, Five Eyes Ministers from the member countries - New Zealand, Canada, Australia, the US and UK - issued a statement stating the group is as determined to counter the "grave threats" online as they are to dealing with them in the physical world. The focus included aspects of counterterrorism, countering violent extremism, countering foreign interference, protecting critical infrastructure, migration, border management and law enforcement.

We are informed that New Zealand and its Five Eyes intelligence partners are calling on the digital online industry to take urgent action to stop child pornographers, terrorists and violent extremists from finding a platform on the Internet. The Web can now be a big dark scary place, and NZ needs to defend its citizens against the nasties out there. At the same time, however, we have to make sure that we do not give agencies powers which can be used against the same citizens. Who will guard against the guardians?

Call To Action By Edward Snowden:

"For most of history, surveillance was costly and resource-intensive, so governments had to be selective in whom they targeted. Today, surveillance is digital, automated, and

pervasive, and governments can afford to track and record nearly everyone. This is not science fiction—it is happening now, with those on the edge of society knowing all too well what it means to live under the unblinking eye of judgment. Truly understanding their experience may be our last chance to stay free".

"Malkia's* radical lesson is about the nature of rights: The best way to protect somebody is to protect everybody—especially the most vulnerable among us" (*Wired*, 18/9/18). * Malkia Cyril, daughter of a Black Panther mother. "My sister and I made a Freedom of Information Act request for my mother's FBI file. They located 1,422 pages responsive to our request". Malkia's organisations help to safeguard groups like Black Lives Matter against surveillance.

In the summer of 2017, probably prompted by the Trump Administration, the FBI's Counterterrorism Division invented a brand new label and a brand new threat. The FBI has designated a new group of domestic terrorists: "Black Identity Extremists," or BIEs. The report broadly categorises black activists as threats to national security. It labels black activists — whose central demands are that Government officials be responsible stewards of their power, accountable to the people who elect them and transparent about decision-making — as a threat to national security (*Washington Post*, 19/10/17).

Russia Blamed For Embassy Health Problems

In November 2016, Americans at the US Embassy in Cuba began complaining about health problems, including hearing loss, brain injuries, and problems with balance and vision. US intelligence agencies suspect that Russia is likely behind the mysterious attacks on US personnel in China as well as Cuba. The US believes Embassy personnel in Cuba have been targeted by some sort of a weapon, possibly one using acoustic, microwave, or electromagnetic technology.

In 2018 an American at the US Consulate in Guangzhou, China, de-

scribed similar symptoms. Russia also has developed microwave technology capable of carrying out an attack producing similar results. However, the investigation has not yet concluded. The FBI, CIA, and "other US agencies" are involved in this investigation and American accusations are said to be based on evidence including communications intercepts (*NBC News*, 11/9/18; on *The Blaze Website*). Five Eyes in action!

GRU: Another Incompetent Spy Agency

Proof positive: over the last few months, the Russian military intelligence agency, the GRU, has been exposed in a number of basic blunders that show it to be quite capable of emulating the messes created every so often by the Western spooks. *CBS News* (4/10/18) reported how Dutch government agencies blocked a cyberattack by Russian intelligence agents in April 2018. They easily identified four Russians behind the alleged operation, which targeted the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) headquarters in The Hague. GRU agents were caught with a rental vehicle full of computer equipment and transformers used in the plot.

The *Guardian* (5/10/18) reported that the Russian spooks could be identified through Google as graduates of an elite GRU academy, and were "reckless and absurdly sloppy". One of the suspected agents had registered five vehicles at the north-western Moscow address of the GRU finishing school for military attaches and elite spies. Moreover, the "meticulous" Russians had held on to their taxi receipts from GRU headquarters. One of the men played for an amateur Moscow football team "known as the security services team. Almost everyone works for an intelligence agency". The team rosters are publicly available (*Guardian*, *ibid.*).

Aljazeera reported another GRU failure was an operation conducted to interfere with the investigation into the 2014 shooting down by missile of the Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 over eastern Ukraine, by targeting Malaysian government institutions, including the Attorney General's office and Malaysian Police. Dutch officials found that GRU agents had logged into wifi networks near a Malaysian hotel where investigators had gathered. *Aljazeera* also reported (5/10/18) the British authorities saying that in March 2018, immediately after the nerve agent attack on ex-Russian spy Sergei Skripal in Salisbury, the GRU

were caught trying to hack into Foreign Office computer systems via a phishing attack.

The Salisbury attack demonstrated a series of bumbles. The GRU hitmen supposedly named "Petrov" and "Boshirov" claimed they had been planning their visit to Salisbury for a long time, but records show they made their initial booking – and checked in online – at 20:00 GMT on 1 March 2018, the night before their short trip to London and Salisbury.

The Russian media outlet Fontanka has previously published information on Boshirov and Petrov's passport files, indicating that they were separated by only three digits (-1294 and -1297), meaning that they were issued at nearly the same time (*Bellingcat Website*, 14/9/18). It is somehow comforting to know how badly spooks, of all varieties, can cock things up so completely. □



MOBILISE FOR ACTION ON THE THREAT TO PEACE!

From Geopolitics And Counter-Insurgency To Anti-Submarine Warfare And Space War

- Dennis Small

"Like oil, water is becoming a source of wars as it is commodified, and privatised..." Vandana Shiva points to capitalist globalisation and free trade driving the intensifying competition for the Earth's natural resources ("Resource Wars: The Heavy Ecological And Political Footprint Of Economic Globalisation", Inter Press Service, 1/6/06, <http://www.ipsnews.net/2006/06/resource-wars-the-heavy-ecological-and-political-footprint-of-economic-globalisation/>). In the wake of invasions, Western sponsorship of counter-insurgency (COIN), e.g., in Afghanistan and Iraq, or of insurgency, e.g., in Syria, is central to this competition.

"The US has killed, maimed, displaced, and otherwise harmed an astonishing number of people in its 241-year record of murder and mayhem – including 20 million killed in 37 nations since 1945... "Yemen (is now subject to) a developing humanitarian catastrophe in one of the poorest nations on the planet". Many people "have been killed and maimed by airstrikes conducted by a regional coalition headed by the US-equipped Saudi Arabian regime". Trump has cruelly escalated America's own drone/bomber assault on Yemen, exulting even in being "far less squeamish about directly generating Yemeni casualties, and about explicitly aiding the Saudis and their Persian Gulf allies in the fight against the allegedly Iran-affiliated Houthis. 'Say No to American Terrorism'" ("The United States And The Crucifixion Of Yemen", www.commondreams.org, 8/08/17).

"US strategy for NZ': The new boss of the US military strategy for the Indo-Pacific region... Admiral Philip Davidson (of) the US Indo-Pacific Command (previously Pacific Command...has spoken about China's assertion of its perceived claims to

territories in the South China Sea; and the threat he believed this posed to maritime routes. He said NZ was a 'key friend'" (Press, 24/7/18). Davidson was scheduled to visit NZ in August 2018.

"Interoperability with our traditional partners is a critical strategic imperative for the (NZ) Defence Force ... The Defence Force will also likely continue to be called on to support maritime security further afield – as it has recently with the deployment of P-3 Orion maritime patrol aircraft to the Indian Ocean region ..." ("Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018" [SDPS:2018"], NZ Ministry of Defence, p38).

In July 2018, the NZ government announced its purchase of four new Boeing P-8A Poseidon maritime, anti-submarine warfare (ASW) planes to replace the old P-3 Orions, as mandated by Big Brother US, and its "Five Eyes" intelligence/covert action agreement. Our Government is gearing up again for World War III [WWIII] ("New Zealand's Doomsday Commitment: Anti-Submarine Warfare", Dennis Small, Peace Researcher (PR) 6, First Series, 1984, <https://www.scribd.com/document/33723181/Peace-Researcher-Vol1-Issue06-1984>).

The arms race in space is being boosted by the Trump Administration's new space war programme ("Please, President Trump, Don't Bring War To Space", Washington Post, 18/6/18, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/please-president-trump-dont-bring-war-to-space/2018/06/18/7caca736-7314-11e8-b4b7-308400242c2e_story.html?utm_term=.d6e48e6c6d53). "NZ is developing its national space policy, and Defence has an important role to play in this process", embracing

"closer interoperability in space" with "NZ Defence's partners" ("SDPS:2018", op. cit.). Military madness rules, OK!?"

Free Market Spree

Since the 1970s, Western capitalist forces have effectively buried both environmental and social justice concerns in an unprecedented and momentary spurt of hedonistic consumerism worldwide. The corporate brigade was unleashed as much as possible in a free market spree, marked again by a greatly enhanced and renewed bout with the advent of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1995. Neo-liberalism has been the doctrine that has rationalised and facilitated this process. *Transnational corporations (TNCs) rule, ok!?"*

Coupled with this hard Right politico-economic doctrine, the so-called "War on Terror" from 9/11 has given free rein right up to the present for a long wave of "neo-con" (neo-conservative), and neo-fascist, illegally-mandated warfare, rampant human rights abuses, and brazen interventions in what used to be called the "Third World". In a deliberately and clinically calculated fashion, "shock and awe" barbarism took globalist centre stage in the proclaimed defence of what the Anglo-American axis defines as "civilisation", "democracy", the "free world", and even "human rights".

Merging The Market And Militarism

This programme has stepped up yet another gear with the advent of paleo-conservative "Trumpism" to the White House. It has been characterised by an enlarged and very volatile boost for Social Darwinist competition, and even openly and unashamedly flaunted fascist-type

policies and practices (see my [abc/pr-backissues/pr54.pdf](https://pr-backissues/pr54.pdf)).

Militarism and the market are increasingly merging in American geopolitical strategy – in trade wars, economic sanctions, boycotts, international nodes of conflict, drone strikes, special forces' depredations; covert “black ops”, etc. (see my article “Militarist Market Strategy And Tactics: Global Capitalist Ideology And Growing Crisis”, in *PR* 50, November 2015, https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BwCB6Aysm_HHWktGRVVzRV91Vzg/view)

“A huge conventional and nuclear arsenal allows America to do what it will around the world with impunity – it is the iron hand in the velvet glove of US corporate globalisation” (“The New Nuclear Danger: George W Bush's Military-Industrial Complex”, Helen Caldicott, Scribe Publications, 2002). Helen Caldicott, the internationally renowned anti-nuclear and peace activist, well warns in her latest book that, “with the world's attention focused on climate change and terrorism, we are in danger of taking our eyes off the nuclear threat” (“Sleepwalking To Armageddon: The Threat Of Nuclear Annihilation”, ed. Helen Caldicott, New Press, 2017).

But globalisation is now running head-on into all sorts of troubling problems – from conflict over trade to the deepening competition for maritime resources. Trumpism is overturning some of the

West's key operative assumptions. Recently, even “the tight five” of the Anglo-American axis, i.e. the so-called “Five Eyes” intelligence/covert action alliance of the US, Britain, Canada, Australia, and NZ are showing some signs of friction and tension due to the maverick behaviour of the Trump Administration (e.g., “So Much For Allies – US Imposes Tariffs”, *Press*, 2/6/18).

Rubbishing The Rules

In particular, the appeal to NZ's Defence Force to do its best to safeguard, and even help “to strengthen the international rules-based order” is riddled with some glaring contradictions (Ron Mark's “Minister of Defence Foreword”, “SDPS:2018”, p3). This is not only because of NZ's record as a junior client member of “Five Eyes”, but because of the Trump Administration running amok on the global scene.

President Donald Trump and his cronies are challenging international rules across a wide range of dimensions – from the United Nations (UN) to the WTO, and from illegal vicious interventions in a host of countries to overthrowing peace agreements. Our own Prime Minister (PM) Jacinda Ardern's admirable maiden speech at the UN in September 2018 has been widely seen as a rebuttal of Trump's latest neo-fascist broadside earlier there the same month.

The controversy regarding the nuclear deal with Iran, forged by the previous Obama Administration in 2015, illustrates the growing crisis of the so-called “international rules-based order”. President Trump has cavalierly rejected this nuclear

peace agreement, and done this brazenly in the face of the protestations of the other parties to the agreement, including Western allies. Furthermore, Trump has orchestrated this break with a pernicious, very artificially concocted propaganda attack on Iran. America is obviously bent on trying to engineer yet another “regime change” in the Middle East at any cost.

Blowback, “Fake News”, And Fall-Out

Yet, continuing blowback for the US, and more generally the West, from imperialist repression and exploitation – especially in the Middle East – has at times been quite dramatic since the terrorist attacks of 9/11, 2001. The illegal invasions and continuing occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq are still reaping the whirlwind. This payback has been, as well, very erosive of any adherence to humane principles, *along with all their routine posturing and highly propagandised pretence!* (see, e.g., “The Terrorist War On Terrorism” by Murray Horton, *PR* 26, October 2002, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/pr-backissues/pr26.pdf>; and “Middle East Turmoil And Beyond: Political Blowback In Action”, Dennis Small, *PR* 43, May 2012, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/pr-backissues/pr43.pdf>).

The propaganda camouflage has certainly been wearing very thin. Resentment and anger had been long festering among the peoples of the whole region, and well beyond. Tacit denial and discriminatory silence, cover-ups, artificial contrivance, pretence, misrepresentation, highly selective morality, and the smoke-screen “fog of war” have been – *and continue to be* – among the standard ploys of the mainstream media in foreign policy.

The record is damning (“Truth, War Propaganda, CIA, And Media Manipulation”, 23/4/16,

<https://www.globalresearch.ca/truth-propaganda-and-media-manipulation/23868>; for a very illuminating, illustrative case study of Central America in the 1980s listen to: “Noam Chomsky – The US Media As A Propaganda System” – Audio Only, 8/1/16, *YouTube*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=viiww-9wN5c>).



In his inimitable style, Noam Chomsky has most tellingly exposed the systematic perfidy perpetrated by bastions of the American media like the *New York Times* (NYT) and the *Washington Post* (WP). Such media organs operated to protect “terrorist America’s” dirty work in Central America, a very egregious example of the propaganda syndrome at work (ibid.). At the black heart of all this lie the corporate interests of America’s ruling class.

Duplicity, Deceit, And Denial For The Death Squads

US support for COIN (counter-insurgency) death squads flourished happily in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, while the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)-contrived “insurgency” by the *contras* waged a murderous (yet fruitless) campaign against the revolutionary Sandinista government in Nicaragua. The American mainstream media overwhelmingly backed the State terrorist regimes, and correspondingly cast the Nicaraguan conflict as a so-called “civil war” (ibid.).

Mind you, unfortunately, American political pressure has certainly prevailed in the longer run with its general subjugation of Central America. The US has used the regional human toll and war-weariness inflicted by its COIN programme to exact due punishment in political, economic, social, and environmental costs on local populations. This is graphically illustrated by the steady stream of refugee would-be migrants as this human wreckage washes up on the southern border of the imperial power itself. *Hence, Trump’s beloved wall as yet another symbol of American humanity in action!* The “Free World” must surely defend its freedom at all costs.

Since 9/11, of course, the Middle East has been by far the most dominant theatre of Western intervention, and media “war game” posturing. Painful ironies, poignant in perversity, pervade this region, and regions further afield in all their multiplying ramifications (“The Terrorist War On Terrorism”, op. cit.; “Middle East Turmoil”, op. cit.; “More Media War-mongering”, Parts I & II, Dennis Small, PR 41 & 42, July & November 2011, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/pr-backissues/pr41.pdf> and <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/pr-backissues/pr42.pdf>).

“Fake news” is nothing new!

Civilisation At Stake

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, the US launched its invasion of Afghanistan to take revenge and to root out Osama bin Laden’s al Qaeda and overthrow the Taliban regime. Yet, once before in the near past, America had lured the Russians into a similar invasion in order to give them their own “Vietnam” debacle and disaster. In its usual blundering suicidal stupidity, the US has been hoist by its own petard, stumbling into yet another quagmire. *History has repeated itself again!* The Russians must be constantly amused in this particular case, if also increasingly disturbed in a more general sense, by the continually rash and aggressive antics of the bumbling, deluded, and counter-productively disruptive global hegemon.

The US, too, so often tows its mates like NZ down into the pit. NZ has extended its US-mandated military presence in Iraq until June 2019 (“Middle East Missions Extended”, *Press*, 18/9/18). “The deployment in Afghanistan (with its focus on intelligence operations) has also been extended to September 2019, alongside three smaller peacekeeping missions” (ibid.). PM Ardern said that NZ is dedicated “to international efforts to fight ISIS” [Islamic State] (ibid.).

Within the Labour-led Coalition Government itself, the Green Party stays admirably staunch against deployment in the first place, and now against the ensuing “mission creep” (ibid.). It calls for us to give more humanitarian and reconstruction aid to Iraq, and engage in as much peace-making as possible. While the NZ troops and personnel deployed in both Iraq and Afghanistan are officially said to be “strictly non-combat”, their training and intelligence roles can be critical to the conduct of combat.

Intensifying Insurgency, And Then The Final Solution?!

Nowadays, the US remains mired in an intractable war in Afghanistan – a war into its 18th year! The mujahideen Taliban are powerfully resurgent, ISIS is running amok, and, as always, ordinary Afghans are experiencing an awful, ongoing toll in lives lost and ruined, widespread deprivation, stress, and suffering. Moreover, the US is flailing around wildly, clumsily, and counter-productively on regional geopolitics (e.g., “US Scraps Military Aid To Pakistan Over Taliban Links”, *Press*, 4/9/18).

In the late 1960s, Yugoslav historian Vladimir Dedijer spelt out two key lessons of guerrilla war (dependent on circumstances of place and time). The first is “that technical superiority in arms and logistic support possessed by the forces opposing the guerrillas is quite unimportant in determining the outcome of the war. A second general feature is that military commanders tend to be blind to the true character of a guerrilla movement, which they are fighting, and that they make the same political, psychological and tactical mistakes over and over again” (“The Poor Man’s Power”, in “Unless Peace Comes”, ed. Nigel Calder, Allen Lane/The Penguin Press, 1968, p35).

Presciently, Dedijer well warned that the “fearsome new weapons that military science and technology” – what is now labelled the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) – being made available to regular forces would prove counter-productive, unless employed in a totally destructive way (ibid.). Wasting the land and mass killing would be the methods required to crush the insurgency – **in other words, ruin and destroy the country in order to save it!**

Pushing Pentagon Policy

But the Pentagon and its puppet politicians, along with so much of the mass media, are locked in a bungling militarist mindset. They seem imperviously incapable of cutting their losses, let alone adopting any positive alternatives, other than digging deeper holes for themselves, and thus constantly creating more hatred, more antagonism, and more foes. This is indeed the essence of what the US considers to

be civilised behaviour. In 2018, American-led NATO forces have been pretty well forced to abandon the countryside to the insurgents, and retreat to the capital Kabul and other towns ("Kabul Under Siege", *60 Minutes*, Prime, 16/9/18).

In Afghanistan, the winning of "hearts and minds" according to the US-led North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) strategy, has meant a free hand for death squad night raids on suspected rebels, and regular drone/bomber attacks, both methods ostensibly targeted at the insurgent leadership. The results have been bad. "The US forces have often been blamed for nighttime raids on villages, detentions, and airstrikes that have brought the population in southern Afghanistan to the point of revolt" ("Civilian Deaths Imperil Support For Afghan War", *New York Times*, 6/5/09, <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/07/world/asia/07afghan.html>).

NZ Special Air Service (SAS) troops were in the past involved in this sort of dirty work strategy. An NZ government special inquiry into one particular, controversial incident is now under way ("\$2m Budget For NZDF Afghanistan SAS Raid Special Inquiry Office", *Stuff* 3/9/18, <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/106778657/2-million-budget-for-nzdf-afghanistan-sas-raid-special-inquiry-office>; see "Hit & Run: The New Zealand SAS In Afghanistan And The Meaning Of Honour", Nicky Hager & Jon Stephenson, Potton & Burton, 2017. This was reviewed by Jeremy Agar in *PR* 53, June 2017, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/pr-backissues/pr53.pdf>).

A Visible Free Hand For Felonious Violence

In typical barbaric fashion, the Trump Administration has given a carte blanche for its death squads, and to hell with any civilian casualties (*60 Minutes*, op. cit.). General John Nicholson, the outgoing US and NATO Commander for the Western occupation of Afghanistan, has obviously exulted in this sort of COIN programme (ibid.). Nicholson even boasted about killing Taliban in such large numbers that they would

have to surrender or die (ibid.). As per best COIN policy and practice, the US and its allies are locked in a compounding cycle of violence. But, naturally, according to the standard line, any brutality is only that perpetrated by the Taliban, ISIS, and other such insurgents.

Thus, the American State terrorist strategy in Afghanistan, and worldwide, is to try and kill as many of their endless enemies as possible, especially nationalist resistance fighters! Remember again the war for freedom against the Russian invader? COIN is certainly a Western-contrived and most contorted body of theory, doctrine, and practice. There are lessons taught by history that have to be learnt again, and again. And, so often too, as Vladimir Dedijer pointed out long ago, lessons are invariably and painfully misconstrued on the basis of particular sets of circumstances, and conditions. Let us emphasise this observation once more.

Battle For The Mind

"As the Americans (demonstrated) in Vietnam, an overwhelming material superiority of modern military forces over the guerrillas tends to foster policy based on purely military decisions when, in such a case, above all others, the psychological character of the struggle makes the political circumstances supremely important" ("Battlefields Of The 1980s", Andre Beaufre, in "Unless Peace Comes", op. cit., p23). Basically, the invaded can hate the invader! But the systematic application of armed force is integral to the American psyche. **The battle for the mind is to be won by sheer firepower – either eliminate, or cower the enemy into submission!**

The media, too, are always to the fore in performing their support duty, both on the actual foreign front and domestically. Psychological warfare is critical on the home front. In 2018 TVNZ showed the American war-mongering series *The Warfighters* on Duke, the boys' channel. This series calculatedly celebrates the systematic brutality perpetrated by US special forces in Afghanistan and Iraq. It serves as "War on Ter-

ror" propaganda camouflage for America's death squads, and their "black ops"/dirty work in foreign lands.

It is certainly significant that, in Afghanistan, General John Nicholson is being replaced by a new Commander, Lt. General Austin Scott Miller, who has a long background in special operations, including in Afghanistan ("In Afghanistan, Departing US General Asks Taliban For Peace", 3/9/18, <https://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2018/sep/03/departing-u-s-general-asks-taliban-for/>). The Afghan battle is likely to get even bloodier and more brutal, given Trump's open mandate for felonious violence, for the free, unfettered use of the mailed fist.

Mindless, Murderous Muddling Ever Deeper Into The Militarist Mire

By August 2017 the total cost for the Afghan War had already been estimated at roughly \$US2 trillion ("The Financial Costs Of 16 years In Afghanistan", *CNN Money*, 22/8/17, <https://money.cnn.com/2017/08/21/news/economy/war-costs-afghanistan/index.html>). The Pentagon tells American taxpayers that the war costs \$US45 billion per year, accounting for some 90% of the outlays involved.

As well as flagging a frankly free hand for his death squads, President Trump has sent 3,000 extra troops to Afghanistan, making up a total of 14,000 US soldiers, the overwhelming majority of the NATO coalition. But, after 17 years of bloody repression, the Yanks cannot even now use the road to Kabul Airport because of the danger of attack. They have to actually travel by helicopter the very short distance (five minutes' flight time) to the airport! (*60 Minutes*, op. cit.).

Both civilians and Afghan government soldiers and police are being killed or injured on a horribly escalating scale. The current Afghan puppet President lives surrounded by walls and concrete barriers. Angry protesting crowds have called for his death. Without American support, he himself openly acknowledges that his regime would collapse

overnight. *Oh, the ever multiplying and intensifying angst and karma of the Anglo-American empire!!*

Pernicious Lying And Self-Fulfilling Propaganda

South African-born Lara Logan, chief foreign affairs correspondent at CBS and long-time “War on Terror” propagandist, interviewed General Nicholson about the situation on the ground (ibid.). Both Nicholson and Logan pushed the propaganda message of al Qaeda being still present in Afghanistan, and thus the legitimate reason for the US’s continuing presence there (ibid.). The US-led NATO coalition cannot supposedly let Afghanistan again become a safe haven for terrorism.

Yet, American recruitment of the most dedicated fundamentalist and fanatical Muslim fighters against the Russian occupation laid a lot of the foundation for the current jihadist resistance against foreign invaders in the first place. Anyway, as the British imperialists learnt to their cost back in the past the Afghans have always been fiercely independent.

Moreover, after 9/11, when the US-led intervention drove out al Qaeda, the American forces stupidly stayed on to stir up most of the nation against them. They have actually created the conditions for the rise of al Qaeda-type groups. There are, in 2018, allegedly 21 insurgent and terrorist affiliations operative in Afghanistan, i.e., according to the American/NATO line.

CBS reporter Logan, a “notorious, pro-military hawk”, is an unashamed peddler of disinformation (“CBS’ Lara Logan Disaster: Why They’re Really Considering Taking Her Back”, *Salon*, 6/5/14, https://www.salon.com/2014/05/06/cbs_lara_logan_disaster_why_they_really_considering_taking_her_back/). But the CIA/Pentagon-embedded CBS has promoted Logan as its star reporter for this very reason, among others. She proved true to form in her latest effort on Afghanistan (60 Minutes, op. cit.).

Both Lara Logan and General Nicholson pushed the view of the Afghan War as being all about the

“War on Terror”, even conveying the idea that the Taliban are actually part of al Qaeda (ibid.). You know al Qaeda, of course – i.e., the terrorist group responsible for 9/11; and a group that the US has also backed in de facto fashion against the Assad regime in Syria and elsewhere, with covert support and training – as illustrated, e.g., in Lebanon (“Seymour Hersh On US Policy Toward Iran”, National Public Radio (NPR), 27/2/07, <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=7618708>; see also later below).

Western Barbarism Unleashed!

American peace activists are thankfully still not giving up on their appeals to human decency and, indeed, common sense (“Stop Killing And Dying In Afghanistan”, *Scoop* 18/9/18, David Swanson, <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL1809/S00106/stop-killing-and-dying-in-afghanistan.htm>). In terms of disaster, it is overwhelmingly true that Afghanistan is yet another poor country that has suffered horribly, and continues to suffer, at the hands of the world’s biggest, and by far the worst terrorist state. Afghanistan, to be sure, has been the victim of the geopolitical machinations and violent brutality of two “superpowers”, and has undergone some **40 years of war!**

One of the poorest countries in the world still faces the prospect of an interminably terrible future, owing so much to the accident of its geographical position. Later, in 2003, malignly invoking the spectre of 9/11: “America invaded Iraq not for Saddam Hussein’s mythical ‘weapons of mass destruction’ (WMD) – which had long ago been destroyed – but to change the map of the Middle East”, much as the British and French had done “more than 80 years earlier” post-WWI (“The Great War For Civilisation: The Conquest Of The Middle East”, Robert Fisk, Harper Perennial, 2005/6, pxxiii). This was a project cheered and egged on by the large brigade of “neo-cons”/neo-fascists, as exemplified by Thomas Barnett in Washington (e.g., “The Pentagon’s New Map: War And Peace In The Twenty-First Century”, Thomas PM

Barnett, Berkley Books, 2004).

Rolling Forward The Frontier - Hurrah For American Imperialism!?

Barnett’s brazenly proclaimed neo-imperialism was lauded as “a truly bold vision for American foreign policy” in the 21st Century by various advocates from a wide range of US media and institutions – *The Wall Street Journal*; USNews.com; *Publishers Weekly*; *Booklist*; The Arlington Institute; *The Washington Times*; *National Review*; The Brookings Institution; International Resources Group Ltd.; etc.

At the time of publication, Robert Orr, Vice-President and Washington Director of that key Establishment institution, the Council on Foreign Relations, proclaimed that: “Barnett’s work is a tour de force. I have never seen such a persuasive presentation linking defence policies and globalisation analyses”, cited in “Praise For *The Pentagon’s New Map* and Thomas PM Barnett” (ibid.). *American market militarism should rule, ok?!* And then, thank God, along came Trump to make America great again!!

As well as digging a deeper hole for itself in Afghanistan and consolidating its position in Iraq, the US under Trump has also decided to keep a foothold in Syria, where it still has a flagrantly illegal presence. National Security Adviser John Bolton, one of America’s militarist madmen, has now indicated that the Anglo-American axis and its American/British troop brigade (along with the CIA, etc.!) will remain there, ostensibly now to counter Iran (“Bolton Rules Out Swift US Withdrawal From Syria”, *Press*, 24/8/18).

Obviously, this stay in Syria looks to be indefinite, taking into account the US’s underlying ultimate geopolitical agenda. The US, for sure, continues to play its long double-game in Syria and the wider region, screened from scrutiny for the most part by the mass media. For instance, on the one hand, the US has cynically betrayed the Kurds in Afrin to the violent inroads of the Turkish government, while on the other, “US-backed Syrian (rebel) forces”, led by Kurdish fighters, carry on armed

conflict with ISIS (“Kurdish-Led Forces Battle Extremists”, *Press*, 17/9/18). In their war on Kurds, the Turks have also even intruded into northern Iraq.

The Planet's Biggest Predator On The Prowl Again

Meanwhile, proxy-engineered land grabs can be so useful and such fun! As an example, “Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)” were engaged in hostilities against ISIS in Bagouz village, eastern Syria, during September 2018, and were planning “to open another front in the Sousseh area” (ibid.). This US-backed force is gaining as much ground as it can in the oil-rich province of Deir ez-Zor. The greater goal of control here is thus in direct competition with the Russians, whom the Syrian government designates as the sole foreign power to oil rights in its country.

This underlying Social Darwinist resource war must naturally remain camouflaged by the great majority of the Western mass media. But Washington's agenda is evident enough. America's blatant arrogance can be breath-taking alright. “US and Israeli officials have said Iran and Hezbollah should end their armed presence in Syria” (“US-Backed Forces Storm IS Village In East Syria As Israel Hits Damascus”, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16/9/18).

“Earlier this month [September], an Israeli military official said the Jewish state has struck over 200 Iranian targets in Syria over the past 18 months” (ibid.). Israel claims that these targets have been connected to Iran's elite al-Quds force, and its close collaboration with Hezbollah (ibid.). International law and the supposed sovereignty of nation states are ignored by the US, Israel, and their Western mates any time that they can plead, whatever the pretence, the justification of pre-emptive war – however illegal. This leaves aside the constant covert interventions.

Being Blindly And Perversely Pre-emptive – And To Hell With Positive Peace-Making!

In the case of Israel, the background for this violent pre-emptive

strategy had its roots in early Zionism well before the terrible legacy of the Holocaust. Tellingly enough, Israeli investigative journalist Ronen Bergman has revealed the long and grim history of his country's death squad policy and practices (“Rise and Kill First: The Secret History of Israel's Targeted Assassinations”, Random House, 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rise_and_Kill_First). Such State terrorism is addictive – self-justifying and self-fulfilling – and results in a syndrome spiralling downward out of control.

The September 2018 terrorist attack on a military ceremony in Ahvaz, in oil-rich south-western Iran, certainly bears the typical US/Israeli/Saudi/Gulf States' stamp. To be sure, Iran's leadership has no doubts that the hand of the “Great Satan” was behind it (“Iran Vows Vengeance For Mass Shooting”, *Press*, 25/9/18). “Iran's President (Hassan Rouhani) accused US-backed insurgents” for the mayhem” (ibid.).

President Rouhani roundly condemned what has for decades been the inner essence of American foreign policy, behind the front of a dedicated commitment to an “international rules-based order”: *strategic violence*. This inner core is now exploding to an even greater scale with the advent of Trumpism. Rouhani well said: “America is acting like a bully towards the rest of the world ... and thinks it can act based on brute force” (ibid.). As well, he charged Britain, the Netherlands, and Denmark with “harbouring Iranian opposition groups”, linked to violent anti-Iranian activities (ibid.). He pledged Iran's resistance (ibid.).

Ever since the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the US has been planning and working to destabilise the Iranian regime (e.g., “Seymour Hersh On US Policy Toward Iran”: NPR, 27/2/07, <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=7618708>; “US Is Said To Expand Covert Operations In Iran”, *Washington Post*, 30/6/08).

The long-hallowed American policy of using ethnic differences for political ends - stemming back from the European settler conquest of the Native Americans - has been rife

throughout the world over several centuries. Arab separatists claimed responsibility for the September 2018 attack in Iran (“Separatists Claim Attack During Military Parade”, *Press*, 24/9/18). The four terrorists killed at least 25 people, and wounded over 60 (ibid.). This attack targeted Revolutionary Guard soldiers, long the bête noire of US political rhetoric. As well, ISIS claimed responsibility for this attack.

The Terminology And Strategy Of Terrorism

Language, as George Orwell showed so remarkably in his own writings, is critical to the use of propaganda and political control. In an Associated Press report, as reproduced in the *Press* and just cited above (ibid.), certain terms were used for the attackers of the Iranian military parade. These were: “separatists”; “militants”; and “gunmen” (ibid.). It is very noteworthy that the term “terrorist” was not used. This term is overwhelmingly applied by the Western political Establishment and its media to their proscribed enemies.

In contrast, for example, such a term is regularly used with reference to Iran and its activities, although by any objective standard these activities pale into relative insignificance, as compared with those of the US itself. It is also of especial note that ISIS, besides the Arab separatists, has claimed responsibility for this raid. ISIS, whether or not facilitated by US/Israeli “black ops” dirty work, could well have played a hand in this terrorist action. For sure, American foreign policy evil is now being openly paraded on the world scene.

Trump's National Security Adviser, John Bolton, and even Trump's personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, are both proudly indicating that the US will topple the Iranian government (“Iran Fears Plot By US And Its Gulf Allies As Pressure Grows”, *New York Times*, 23/9/18). All this stuff is, of course, part of the propaganda intended to stir up unrest in Iran, and duly inflamed by America's poisonously viperish Ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley (“Iran Vows Vengeance”, op. cit. *In October 2018 Haley announced that she would be resigning from the UN*

post by the end of the year. Ed).

Back in the Reaganite/Thatcher 1980s, the US used the CIA-instigated and facilitated *contras* against the revolutionary Government in Nicaragua. Likewise, it has fostered a multitude of socio-economic and ethnic cleavages in a host of countries, in order to destabilise or overthrow governments that it considered to be “politically incorrect”. The case of Iran could soon come to mirror that of Syria in a number of critical aspects.

Iran is now “in the grips of a desperate economic situation brought on by sweeping US sanctions” (ibid.). With the deliberate disruption of the 2015 nuclear deal, which has been so good for international cooperation, the Trump Administration is now out to spread turmoil throughout the Middle East and beyond, and derail any attempts at positive peace-making anywhere.

The Mad Militarist “Mullahs” Of Washington

The madmen (and women, e.g., US Ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley) of Washington are exulting in their Orwellian neo-fascistic hypocrisy, and outrageously self-serving hype. President Trump in his latest Hitler-like diatribe at the UN during September 2018 condemned Iran for spreading “chaos, death, and destruction” - exactly what the US had done for decades! Trump even appealed at this forum to unilateralism and *patriotism* over internationalism and “globalism”.

While we ourselves (i.e. Anti-Bases Campaign) are part of the anti-globalisation movement, we are, of course, at the same time committed internationalists. In the neo-liberal era, corporate globalism and free trade have been confounded with internationalism and inter-country cooperation. Western governmental and corporate steamrolling of Left-wing anti-globalisation and its alternatives has ironically resulted in the widespread rise of racist and neo-fascist far Right movements. Trumpism and Brexit are both expressions of the unravelling of capitalist globalisation.

While the Trump Administration is

often criticised for being isolationist, the current American stance is actually that of the militarist market, a logical next step in the development of aggressive capitalism. *Look out!* Trump & co are pushing humankind to the brink of catastrophe on a whole range of fronts. **Are we just going to docilely accept this sort of terrorism?!**

Peace-Making And The International Order

In the Middle East, the US and its mates go on creating an ever-worsening mess for the region's inhabitants. Among various other derelict activities, they are effectively backing the al Qaeda-type main rebel group in Syria's north-western province of Idlib, where jihadists (including foreign fighters) were allowed to take temporary refuge.

This group, which had in fact previously split from al Qaeda, has been known as Jabhat al-Nusra or the al Nusra Front, and has since changed its name to Hay'et Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). Its main stronghold is in Idlib city but it has been weakened in recent times by both internal and external jihadist fighting (“Where Is al-Qaeda In Syria?”, al Jazeera, 1/3/18).

The UN has of late been desperately trying to mediate a Syrian ceasefire and prevent another bloodbath, which would involve many more innocent civilian casualties. Seemingly, the Syrian/Russian phalanx had looked set to do what the US-led coalition did in Raqqa, Mosul (in Iraq), and assorted smaller towns in the region in order to eliminate ISIS, i.e. attack the enemy as hard and fast as it can, and to hell with the civilian casualties. For their part, the Western-backed jihadists in Idlib province are clearly prepared to take plenty of civilians with them, whether directly or indirectly.

Between 9,000 and 11,000 people were killed in the nine-month battle of Mosul (e.g., “Mosul: Freedom From ISIS Cost Almost 11,000 Civilian Lives In Nine-Month Battle, Investigation Claims”, *Independent*, 21/12/17, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/mosul-isis-latest-freedom-11000-civilian-deaths-liberation-islamic-state-iraq-9>

-month-battle-a8122336.html). The hypocrisy demonstrated by the Western Establishment and its media in this particular case, one of so many over the years, was nauseating. TVNZ, NZ State TV, virtually even cheered on the State terrorist siege of Mosul, in which our NZ Defence Force also gave a kindly helping hand.

Let's Give Peace A Chance!

Once again, the terrorist policies so openly and unashamedly voiced by the American leadership and its associates, including NZ official participants and representatives, stand as chilling testimony to Anglo-American propaganda, policy, and practice. The routine banality of the evils perpetrated by the Anglo-American axis, its “Five Eyes” club, and all in aid of its ultimate geopolitical objectives, roll on into the future.

Worldwide, we need to rally and give the UN all the backing and help it needs for such peace-making efforts, as currently demonstrated in regard to Idlib, Syria (e.g., “UN Warns Of Idlib Catastrophe”, *Press*, 12/9/18). Thankfully, in Syria, the UN's efforts are making some progress. Russia, Turkey, and the Syrian regime announced the establishment of safe zone in part of Idlib province, which was to be created by mid-October 2018. This area is a buffer zone patrolled by troops from both Russia and Turkey, and no rebel or Government forces will be allowed in it. Russia has promised not carry out a military assault on Syria's rebels in light of the agreement on the demilitarised zone.

Limits have been imposed on the extent of the conflict, and a safe refuge gained for civilians. The international community must build on this positive step. Ironically, and symbolically, this agreement sidelines the US, and marks a rapprochement between Russia and Turkey, two countries that have been backing different sides in Syria's “civil war” to a large degree.

Russia had tried to get Turkey “to separate the estimated 10,000 Islamist HTS fighters from the 30,000-40,000 more moderate ones in Idlib” (“Buffer Zone Deal Puts Offensive On Hold”, *Press*, 19/9/18). But

Turkey pressed for the current compromise (ibid.). However, the Trump Administration might well prove bloody-minded further down the track.

Geopolitical Conundrums, Contradictions, And Conflicts Continue

Lately, several fractious issues have flared up between the US and Turkey, former close allies. Turkey has even been suffering from the imposition of punitive American trade tariffs on major metal exports, partly due to Turkey's imprisonment of an American pastor (e.g. "Trump Vows To Double Steel And Aluminium Tariffs On Turkey", CNN, 11/8/18). The Trump Administration is repeatedly alienating allies, as well as adding to America's multitudinous list of enemies (*active, potential, likely, or possible!*).

These latest, high-handed, unilateral trade sanctions, among other Trumpist measures (e.g., contesting appellate tribunal judges), are so ironically wrecking the protocols and practices of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Yet the US was the main driving force in the late 1980s and early 90s in creating a new free trade regime under WTO auspices and rules. So much then again for all the baloney in "SDPS:2018" about the importance of a "rule-based international order", and working "with those key partners that share our values and interests" (ibid., p3). Our major partner, "Big Brother/Uncle Sam" – the world's biggest rogue nation – is, instead, going haywire.

Geopolitics once more trumps the touted Anglo-American tale about the supposed need to safeguard a "rules-based international order", already long a pile of stinking mince-meat, despite all the propagandistic contrived tripe. President Trump's own operative maxim, as so aptly foreseen some time ago, is surely and effectively "the most brutal: **Power Trumps!**" ("Lawless World: America And The Making And Breaking Of Global Rules", Philippe Sands, Allen Lane/Penguin Books, 2005, p236).

For many years, the US has often acted as a law to itself, and the

Trump Administration has escalated this proclivity, plummeting to new depths of malignancy ("The Death Cult Of Trumpism", *Nation*, 11,1/18, <https://www.thenation.com/article/the-death-cult-of-trumpism/>). But hey, our Foreign Affairs Minister Winston Peters and our Defence Minister Ron Mark, both NZ First Party members, still sing contentedly from the Trumpist American song sheet. **NZ First? – yeah right!**

The First Casualty!

In war, whether overt or covert, the first casualty is so often the truth (for background and context to the current era, see Phillip Knightley's superb history "The First Casualty: From The Crimea to Vietnam: The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist, And Myth Maker", Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975). For the Anglo-American Establishment, it simply does not matter in regard to the host of war crimes and dirty work, which they have committed or facilitated to date. They can count on the mass media that they own and control to protect them, whatever the dastardly deeds done. These war crimes cannot be true, and if so, are definitely inadmissible.

The presiding power elite is eminently self-serving and narrowly focused. Its endless hypocritical posturing is intended to help protect ruling interests and their skins as they see it, whatever the obvious long-term consequences for all of us. Above all, and most malignly, the US has never allowed itself to be subject to any international tribunal.

While it regularly threatens and practises war, the ultimate international illegality, the Trump Administration even these days unashamedly threatens the International Criminal Court (ICC), and any asso-

ciated nation, with sanctions if they have the temerity to indicate, let alone actually initiate a prosecution of the US for war crimes in Afghanistan, and anywhere else ("Legalising Peace Is Far From Simple", *Scoop*, David Swanson, 11/9/18, <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL1809/S00063/legalizing-peace-is-far-from-simple.htm>). Any suggestion of this sort must be scotched immediately!

Wallowing In War Crimes

Despite its burning dedication to the "international rules-based order" (*yeah right!*), the "US threatens (what it labels an) 'illegitimate court'", i.e. the ICC. This Court, in fact, "has 123 State parties that recognise its jurisdiction" (*Press*, 12/9/18). That outstanding long-time militarist and neo-fascist, and now American National Security Adviser, John Bolton, declaims that: "The



ICC unacceptably threatens American sovereignty and US national security interests" (ibid.). You see, the application of international law is unjustifiably and outrageously opposed to legitimate American interests, which clearly must prevail everywhere! (ibid.).

Far Rightist Bolton was pontificating to the Federalist Society, a conservative Washington-based think tank (ibid.). "Bolton also took aim at Palestinian efforts to press war crime charges against Israel for its policies in the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza" (ibid.). Indeed, showing the US's utter contempt for the rule of law, Bolton went on to directly menace the ICC itself. In chilling State terrorist fashion, the

National Security Adviser said that: “for all intents and purposes, the ICC is already dead to us” (ibid.). *The US most certainly excels in killing!*

John Bolton made it clear that the US would use “any means necessary” to protect Americans and citizens of allied countries, like Israel, from any attempts at prosecution by the ICC. “The White House said that to the extent permitted by US law, the Trump Administration would ban ICC judges and prosecutors from entering the US, sanction their funds in the US financial system, and prosecute them in the US criminal system” (ibid.). So, Trump & co. would quite unashamedly screw and bludgeon international law to their advantage without compunction – **this is Yankee imperialism, and fascism to boot!**

America's blatantly belligerent stance has been widely condemned by human rights groups, including Human Rights Watch (ibid.). The American Civil Liberties Union “said Bolton's threats were 'straight out of an authoritarian playbook’” (ibid.) Well, how does little “ole Noo Zealand” shape up here when we really need to make a stand that counts. Not so good. I haven't heard or seen a peep of protest against the US from our political Establishment or our media. Big Brother pulls our strings on such matters, as it does in the case of so many other client states on things that really matter. The US does so with contemptuous bravado.

Hogwash, Hypocrisy, & The “International Rules-Based Order”

Yet the “SDPS:2018” repeatedly declares that NZ/Aotearoa is facing, these days, “a more challenging and complex strategic environment”, exhibiting on occasion cavalier disregard for accepted international norms (op. cit.). More specifically, this global scene, according to “SDPS:2018”, is “one in which the international rules-based order, the foundation for NZ's security and prosperity, is coming under increasing pressure from three broad forces” (ibid., p5).

The “three broad forces” identified

are: (a) “the increasing importance of **spheres of influence**”, i.e. in other words, growing geopolitical competition; (b) “**challenges to open societies** and Western liberalism”; and (c) “a collection of complex disruptors, including an array of impacts from climate change, new technologies changing the nature of conflict, extremist ideologies, and transnational organised crime ... They are forces for disorder” (ibid.).

We have been writing and warning, and banging on about this sort of stuff for many years now (both in *PR* and in *Foreign Control Watchdog (FCW)*, as well as in various other publications over the years, e.g., see my “Globalisation Into Global War? Terrorism And The Capitalist State”, in *Watchdog* 98, December 2001, <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/98/05.htm>; & “Globalisation, Capitalism And Crisis: Contesting The New Social Darwinism”, in *Watchdog* 122, December 2009, <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/22/06.htm>). Our constant appeal has been for the implementation of pre-emptive, peace-making initiatives and measures.

What “SDPS:2018” certainly does not do, of course, is to address in any meaningful way the underlying factors causing the manifestation of the designated “three broad forces”. On planet Earth, economic growth, as driven by capitalist globalisation, inevitably means increasing divisions both between and within countries as competition intensifies. What the NZ government is doing, in actuality, is simply conditioning us to accept the inevitable, unless we take radical, alternative action, including pursuing much of the vision outlined by our PM in her speech at the UN. **It's bloody-minded suicidal stupidity, actually!**

The “SDPS:2018” document mulls over the signs and implications of the changes under way. Yet, it is very evident just how much the public relations (PR) machine has been at work in this Statement. NZ strategic thinking is clearly routed a la its American dictated guidance. Despite the Government's vision articulated at the UN, Trump & co. surely have our NZDF by its balls!

America's “AmBoys*”, NZ Deputy PM and Foreign Affairs Minister Winston Peters and Defence Minister Ron Mark, are perfectly satisfied to ignore the litany of Anglo-American war crimes, lies, and current depredations. Instead, they embrace the impetus to WWII, as signalled by NZ's renewed embrace of anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and the flight of new P-A8 Poseidons (“New Zealand's Doomsday Commitment: Anti-Submarine Warfare”, op cit.). * *AmBoys – America's Boys. Ed.*

“SDPS:2018” “identifies three capabilities areas that will require attention”, with the priority on interoperability with its “Five Eyes” partners (op. cit., p8). The first is: “Maritime domain awareness and response, particularly in NZ's neighbourhood *but also further afield* (my emphasis) (ibid.). On the same page, there are injunctions to such requirements as: helping protect “NZ's critical lines of communication”; meeting “NZ's commitments to its allies and partners”; and acting “in support of regional security arrangements” (ibid.) The two other necessary capabilities required comprise: “A Defence contribution to NZ's secure access to space-based systems”; and, “Enhanced Defence cyber capabilities to provide military commanders with a broader set of tools to achieve military objectives” (ibid.)

Brute Pathology Of The “Killer Ape”

How will NZ meet these demands? Well, you see, our Defence Force will step up to the plate, developing “a mix of capabilities with broad utility” (ibid.). Yet with regard to space, for example, NZ basically “relies on services provided by our partners” (ibid., p26). Above all, and most essentially: “This includes the Global Positioning System (GPS), operated by the US” (ibid.).

GPS would be vital for NZ's prescribed role in US-coordinated ASW against Chinese and Russian submarines. Our Government is also plugging the country into as much American space-oriented industry, including war-related stuff, as possible. Rocket Lab has blazed this particular ground-breaking trail into the heavens (see my: “From 'Big Bang’

Space Race To Trashing The Planet: The Struggle Against The Global Corporates” in *Watchdog* 148, August 2018, <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/48/08.html>).

Oh boy, does the future look exciting, or what?! “NZ’s security and prosperity require reliable electronic communications links, both terrestrial and space-based” (ibid., p30). **Yes sir, to take part in helping blow up the world, we will certainly need to be deeply embedded in the very latest technology for MAD/First Strike!** (*MAD – mutual assured destruction. Ed.*). It is most sobering to reflect on the fact that this kind of mad, militarist mindset typifies the thinking of so-called “defence” forces in the big nation states. This collective mode of self-destructive tribalism is sadly rife. There is something deeply pathological about our species as Freud well determined.

Meantime, the political leadership of the West, including in Aotearoa/NZ, continues to parade its capitalist contradictions, most egregiously that between the pursuit of free trade and the growing competition for natural resources (“SDPS: 2018”, op. cit.; “Resource Wars: The New Landscape Of Global Conflict”, Michael T Klare, Metropolitan/Owl Books, 2001/2; Globalisation Into Global War?; & “Globalisation, Capitalism And Crisis”, op. cit.).

Waging Peace Versus Waging War

American citizen David Swanson is the director of WorldBeyondWar.org, a global movement to end all wars, and campaign coordinator for RootsAction.org. He is a leading advocate for a new comprehensive system of pre-emptive peace-making (ibid., David Swanson: <http://davidswanson.org/legalizing-peace-is-far-from-simple/>; & he also blogs at WarIsACrime.org). His essential message is that “the rule of law has been used both to restrain war and to legitimise it”, and so we must “re-design systems to abolish the institution of war and uphold human and ecological justice” (World Beyond War: <https://worldbeyondwar.org> – NoWar2018).

A tall order indeed, but make no

mistake, human survival depends on it! Either we create a cooperative world community, or we perish. At the very least, it means preventing nuclear war and clashes between the major powers that would usher in a downward spiral. Swanson is the author of the book “War Is A Lie”, (Charlottesville, VA, 2010). He was instrumental in exposing the Downing Street Minutes and other evidence of Iraq war lies (“War Is A Lie – Let’s Try Democracy”, <http://davidswanson.org/downloads/war-is-a-lie-first-edition-2010-audio-mp3/>). He stresses the huge importance of recognising and challenging “false justifications for war and the imperative to reject them”.

Peace-Making Constantly Undermined By Media Propaganda

David Swanson argues that, “while prevention of a US bombing campaign in Syria in 2013, and the upholding of a nuclear agreement with Iran in 2015 left much to be desired, they also provide grounds for encouragement” (ibid.). After all, the success of these campaigns “were built on the public understanding of the lies about Iraq that had been promoted in 2002-2003 by such public figures as Dick Cheney and Hillary Clinton.

Pertinently enough, Swanson argues for a very different understanding of current US wars in Western Asia from that most often promoted on television” (ibid.). Most tellingly, moreover, he points out how calculatedly and cynically in the early days of the explosion of ISIS on to the world scene the corporate crony media paraded a procession of “frightening beheading videos”, particularly of unfortunate Western captives, all “intended to draw the US into war” (ibid.).

This propaganda strategy “succeeded only because the US public is not yet sufficiently resistant to such manipulation” (ibid.). Later, videos of this sort were officially abjured and prescribed as allegedly recruitment devices for ISIS. By then they had served their propaganda function. The disgusting material had done in its job in arousing and inflaming Western opinion. This was clearly the main objective of the mass me-

dia manipulation, as facilitated and promoted by the presiding power elite of the Anglo-American axis, in showing these videos so regularly and widely in the early days of the eruptive emergence of ISIS.

In Flagrante Delicto!

I earlier drew attention to the breathtaking arrogance of US pseudo-diplomacy in regard to Syria. This is again highlighted and exemplified by National Security Adviser John Bolton’s declaration that “Iranian troops must be withdrawn from Syria as a precondition for a peace deal, setting up the prospect of American and British troops remaining indefinitely” (“Bolton Rules Out Swift US Withdrawal From Syria”, op, cit.).

Since Shiite Iran is an ally of the Shiite Assad regime, Iran has a properly legal presence in Syria. But, bizarrely enough, Bolton “said that the US ought to use ‘leverage’ over Russia”, the other key backer of President Bashar al-Assad, “to force it to get rid of Iranian troops” (ibid.). Putin has pretty well told the US to get stuffed on this particular issue.

Significantly enough again, Bolton was reported as making this announcement from Jerusalem, where he was meeting Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (ibid.). In recent times, America has calculatedly inflamed Palestinian anger and Israeli aggression by a raft of new policies and actions – from moving its Embassy to Jerusalem to cutting off humanitarian aid via the UN for the Palestinians. Gaza confrontations have symbolised the worsening conflict between Israelis and Palestinians “Bloody Day On Border As US Embassy Opens”, *Press*, 16/5/18).

American and Israeli joint action has thus effectively signalled that a two-state solution is no longer on the political agenda, whatever the empty words. This is so obviously what Netanyahu & co want, and have long worked so hard to achieve (“Israel’s Slide Into Reactionary Politics Spells The End Of Oslo”, *The National*, 1/6/11, <https://www.thenational.ae/israel-s-slide-into-reactionary-politics-spells-the-end-of-oslo-1.429919>).

The so-called Oslo peace process had been intended to lead to a two-state solution. "There's nothing new about Mr. Netanyahu rejecting the international consensus on a two-state solution. The Prime Minister built his political career out of fighting Oslo, and regained the leadership of the (Rightwing) Likud Party by opposing then PM Ariel Sharon's withdrawal from Gaza" (ibid.).

Mainstreaming Extremism

Lamentably enough, Netanyahu's position has become increasingly Israeli mainstream. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is portentous for the fate of humankind on planet Earth in so many ways. The full support for Zionist Israel by the Trump Administration is not only encouraging Israeli aggression and extremism, but steps up the risks, vis-a-vis Syria, Iran, and even Russia, to another level. For instance, Israel has even threatened to strike Iranian assets in Iraq, just like it does continually in Syria ("Israel: We'll Hit Iranian Missiles Sited In Iraq", *Press*, 5/9/18).

In the last resort, Israel is quite prepared to act unilaterally in its own defence, as it defines the situation. It has done so repeatedly in the past, and the danger looms of some reckless, escalatory action in the future. Israel is not just a projection of American power in the Middle East. Across the world today, the far Right is on the march to the tune of Trumpism, and other variants of the creed, embracing blatantly racist and neo-fascist movements.

Extremism and division are indeed increasing around the planet as the competition for resources, including land, hots up. The warning bells of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict toll for us all. Far better co-ordinated international efforts are urgently required to defuse this particular ticking time-bomb. Our PM herself has made such an appeal.

Ramping Up Repression

While the Israeli Left has declined markedly, the ultra-Orthodox minority has grown from 3% to over 10% out of some 15% of the total Israeli population defined as "religious". An empathetic British Jewish woman, who once lived in an "all-Arab town"

- Tamra in the Galilee - in order to share the experiences of the local people there, gained revealing insights into how the Israeli State was fostering the takeover of Palestinian land ("The Other Side Of Israel: My Journey Across The Jewish-Arab divide", Susan Nathan, HarperCollins Publishers, 2005).

In comparing Israel to apartheid-era South Africa, which she had also experienced at first hand, Susan Nathan observed that religious-nationalist settlers even "view their mission to displace the Palestinians largely in terms of a battle of numbers, so they have huge families, the women seeing themselves as little more than Zionist incubators" (ibid., p236). Here we have then an extraordinary case of Social Darwinist competition, openly framed in Malthusian terms, as justified by politico-religious radicalism. Today, anti-migrant European racists push the same kind of breeding policy.

Even by the late 1990s Zionist extremists were setting the pace and shaping Israel's ultimate State consolidation agenda, so evident under the militarist combination of Trump and Netanyahu. Nathan described the brutal way in which these fanatical extremists were setting up militarised outposts, even in the commandeered homes of Muslim families. Their aim was in the tradition of Israeli COIN (counter-insurgency) – *drive out or kill the opposition, or at the very least effectively marginalise them* (ibid., pp236/7). Jewish settlers were regularly carrying out "vicious attacks" (ibid.).

Usurping The High Ground?

In stark contrast to what Susan Nathan has depicted, there is the reactionary confession of a self-styled Zionist "warrior", Aaron Cohen, from about the same time ("Brotherhood Of Warriors: Behind Enemy Lines With A Commando In One Of The World's Most Elite Counter-Terrorism Units", Aaron Cohen & Douglas Century, HarperCollins, 2008/09). Cohen, who actually grew up in California, served three years in one of Israel's "black ops" units, Sayeret Duvdeven (ibid.). This group is part of the Mistaravim, "the Israeli Army's small commando units

... which operate undercover inside the West Bank and Gaza Strip" ("Chain Of Command: The Road From 9/11 To Abu Ghraib", Seymour M Hersh (Allen Lane/Penguin Books, 2004, p280).

Sayeret Duvdeven specialises in sending covert agents disguised as Arabs into the supposedly Palestinian-controlled West Bank in order to abduct "terrorist" leaders and bring them to Israel for interrogation ("Brotherhood Of Warriors", op. cit.). Sayeret Duvdeven & co obviously serve as so much of the inspiration and model for US/NATO's notorious so-called "capture or kill" death squad operations in Afghanistan.

The Israelis, in fact, actually advised the American invaders/occupiers of Iraq in late 2003: "How to do targeted killing, which is very relevant to the success of the war ... ("Chain Of Command", op. cit.). They stressed the importance of having "a network of informants" to provide relevant intelligence on possible targets (ibid.). So, fear, suspicion, and paranoia are deliberately fostered within the population, fragmenting social and cultural cohesion.

Blundering Blunderbuss COIN In Action

Most ironically, the Israeli military advisers warned in 2003 that: "Israel has, in many ways, been too successful, and has killed or captured so many mid-ranking facilitators on the operational level in the West Bank that Hamas now consists largely of isolated cells that carry out terrorist attacks against Israel on their own" (ibid.). *In some cases, then, the forces of repression can kill too many people!*

The Israeli adviser, cited by investigative reporter Seymour Hersh, "went on, 'There is no central command over many of the suicide bombers. We're trying to tell the Americans that they don't want to eliminate the centre. The key is not to have freelancers out there" (ibid.). Yet with Afghanistan plagued now with suicide bombing, the US persists in its own ruthless blunderbuss strategy, carrying out savage State terrorist strikes, so regularly and happily legitimated by the media

(e.g., “Artillery Strike Kills 50 Taliban Chiefs, Says US”, *Press*, 1/6/18).

In typically cavalier and callous fashion, the US ignores any unfortunate civilian casualties as – *in that notorious example of Orwellian Pentagonese* – just “collateral damage”. The “more aggressive stance taken by American troops, following the revised strategy approved by US President Donald Trump”, was demonstrated by a volley of “GPS-guided rockets”, aimed to kill Taliban leaders (ibid.). *Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) rampant again!*

Suppression By Stealth

In parallel fashion to the tale of self-styled American Jewish warrior Aaron Cohen, we see the underlying grim reality on which Zionism is founded in what Susan Nathan so movingly reveals to us. In her own book, Nathan correspondingly emphasises the long-term goal of the Jewish State to incorporate the city of Jerusalem, so central to the beliefs of the three great monotheistic faiths – Jewish, Muslim, and Christian – firmly within its State borders (“The Other Side Of Israel”, op. cit.). Trump's blessing of the American Embassy not only affirms this project but rallies both Jews and fundamentalist Christians against Islam.

Back in 1967, and in the wake of war, Israel “annexed that Palestinian half of Jerusalem to the Jewish State, in violation of international law, (and) began consolidating its hold by building a ring of Jewish settlements around the eastern neighbourhoods” (ibid., p234). Israel expanded its boundaries “to include these settlers to bolster Israeli claims that the city truly had been unified as the capital of the Jewish State” (ibid., pp234/5).

But the usurpers were also championed by the likes of Aaron Cohen, who freely even acknowledges that his book can be seen as a militaristic, Zionist, and anti-Arab tract (“Brotherhood Of Warriors”, op. cit.). He, however, approvingly quotes the former Israeli Defence Minister, Moshe Dayan, about *revenge* as security to the effect that: “...we can exact a high price for our blood, a price too high for the Arab communi-

ty, the Arab army, the Arab governments to pay” (ibid., p272). Dayan himself was a member of the illegal Jewish guerrilla group, the Hagana, back under the British mandate for Palestine.

The Hagana and other related groups like the Stern Gang later waged a terrorist campaign against British control and the UN. With the proclaimed establishment through war of Israel in 1948, following the defeat of Arab forces, the Hagana became the State's official Defence Force and Moshe Dayan also served as Army Chief of Staff.

Cultivating COIN

Against this sort of background and more recent history, the stage is now set in Palestine/Israel for even greater entrenched conflict and violence. Both the US and Israel are committed to the unscrupulous use of violence for political ends, and are thus prepared accordingly to employ any means that they see fit. They both fervently follow the practices of exacting “shock and awe” revenge as they see it, and the application of State terrorism. Again, we must note the urgency of cooperative international action, engaging all sides as much as possible in constructive dialogue, and using all the positive peaceful methods we can to help chart alternative directions. Zionist Israel itself became a key weapons exporter and leading middleman in the global arms trading network.

Such activity fitted in nicely with its ongoing repression of the dispossessed Palestinians, and occupation of the West Bank and other Palestinian territories. This sort of enterprise also went hand in hand with various proxy and collaborationist work for the American Empire, including death squad operations even in faraway, repressed lands like Guatemala (“The American Connection: Vol. II, State Terror And Popular Resistance in Guatemala”, Michael McClintock, Zed Books, 1985; Vol I dealt with “State Terror And Popular Resistance in El Salvador”). Besides operating throughout the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa, Israel has also been very active over the years in backing and aiding US repression in faraway re-

gions, Central America being of especial interest for my purposes in this article (ibid., see pp192-6).

Gutting Guatemala Nazi-Style!

In the egregiously exemplary case of Guatemala, Israel provided Nazi-style COIN training; advisers; equipment, including weaponry; communications and intelligence; and help with the organisation of militias; and naturally enough, accompanying propaganda (ibid.). It (aided) “in the formation of terrorist commandos” directed against the rebellious rural poor, who comprised the Mayan Indian community and “Ladino” (usually ex-Indians) peasants (ibid.). Portentously enough, “... by 1982 the dollar value of Israeli military assistance (to Guatemala alone) was estimated at \$US90 million” (ibid., p194).

“Guatemala is a particularly striking example of American imperial policies in its own 'backyard'. In 1954, the Eisenhower Administration planned and the CIA organised and funded a military coup that overthrew a (democratically elected) Guatemalan President (Guzman Arbenz) whose modest land reform policies were considered a threat to American corporations. Blowback from this led to a Marxist guerrilla insurgency in the 1980s and so to CIA-and Pentagon-supported genocide against Mayan peasants” (“Blowback: The Costs And Consequences Of American Empire”, Chalmers Johnson, *Time Warner*, 2000/02, p14).

In fact, what is called the “Guatemala Civil War” extended 36 years from 1960 to 1996. Guatemalans are still coming to terms with its legacy of bitterness and divisions, as highlighted by the prosecution of one of the former murderous military leaders, namely the loathsome Efraim Rios Montt (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Efra%C3%ADn_R%C3%ADos_Montt). Montt took personal power as a result of a 1982 coup d'état, and participated in other ways over many years in COIN genocide (ibid.). *Beware Rightwing military officers in any supposed capitalist democracy!*

“In the spring of 1999, a report on the Guatemalan civil war from the

UN-sponsored Commission for Historical Clarification made clear that 'the American training of the officer corps in counter-insurgency techniques' was a 'key factor' in the 'genocide' ... Entire Mayan villages were attacked and burned, and their inhabitants were slaughtered in an effort to deny the guerrillas protection" ("Blowback", op. cit.).

"According to the Commission, between 1981 and 1983 the military government of Guatemala – financed and supported by the US government (*and fulsomely, as we have seen, by the Israelis too*) – destroyed some 400 Mayan villages in a campaign of genocide in which approximately 200,000 peasants were killed" (ibid.). This was a proclaimed programme of "pacification".

Proxy Terrorist Imperialism

It is highly significant that Israel's agents have been involved in implementing oppression in such far-off countries as Guatemala, acting on behalf of the Anglo-American empire. Israel even directly facilitated military coups and "regime change" in Central America. This has been done by a people purportedly haunted by their own terrible experience of genocide. As has happened repeatedly throughout human history, former victims can later themselves become executioners.

For example: "The 300 Israeli advisers present in Guatemala assisted in the coup of March 1982 that brought General Rios Montt to power, and trained officers backing him" ("State Terrorism On A Global Scale: The Role Of Israel", *JSTOR* in Crime and Social Justice, No. 21/22, "International Lawlessness And The Search For Justice" (1984), pp58-80).

The installation of dictator Rios Montt was intended to enforce an even more brutal COIN programme (Efrain Rios Montt, op. cit.). During the 1980s, the Reagan Administration was most enthusiastic and assiduous in fostering the Central American death squads. As outlined above, Noam Chomsky has clinically dissected the media propaganda involved (Noam Chomsky, "The US Media As A Propaganda System", op. cit.).

Terror, Torture, And Other COIN Goodies!

Montt's starkly simple maxim for winning "hearts and minds" was "what was known as the 'guns and beans' campaign, telling the people: **'If you are with us, we'll feed you, if not, we'll kill you'**" [my emphasis] (ibid.). A central debate in Western COIN literature, as can easily be ascertained by reviewing material posted online, still continues as to the appropriate weighting for the application of military force versus social programmes to try and get the support of the local populace.

Such are some of the big intellectual foreign policy concerns of an increasingly militarist Western civilisation these days! In Afghanistan, Iraq, or Syria, or wherever, the US and its mates systematically employ terrorist strategy and tactics – whether by special forces, proxy or contrived groups, bombing, drones, etc. Professor Chalmers Johnson in his devastating review of American bungling imperialist interventions cites the tragic case of the Guatemalan guerrilla leader Efrain Bamaca Velasquez ("Blowback", op. cit.). The "military officer, who arrested, tortured, and murdered Bamaca was a CIA 'asset' and paid \$US44,000 for the information he obtained from him [i.e. Bamaca]" (ibid.).

Bamaca was married to "Jennifer Harbury, an American human rights lawyer who spent years trying to find out what happened to her 'disappeared' husband" (ibid.). Jennifer Harbury has told the poignant story of her quest in "Searching For Everardo" (MacMillan, 1997). Bamaca's "nom de guerre" was Everardo (Jennifer Harbury, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jennifer_Harbury).

His widow's brave quest for the truth has helped out substantially in uncovering the calculated barbarity fostered by the US and its COIN collaborators like Israel (for more background on some of the ground covered so far in my article, see Stephen Kinzer's "Bitter Fruit: The Untold Story Of The American Coup In Guatemala", [co-author] (1982); & also his study of Iran in "All The

Shah's Men: An American Coup And The Roots of Middle East Terror", (2003/08).

Reactionary Roots

Death squad operations by Israel's spy agency Mossad have had a history of intimate links with joint US-Zionist security strategy worldwide. Such ruthlessness was indeed a hallmark of Israeli conduct right from the founding of the State in 1948 ("The Middle East Since 1945", Stewart Ross, Teach Yourself, Hodder Headline Ltd., 2004).

Recently, the NZ Parliament unreservedly and unanimously endorsed the founding of Israel, following a National Party notice of motion. One can even accept the legitimacy of Israel's establishment in the aftermath of WWII, but still strongly contest this country's militaristic imperial role and accompanying human rights abuses, both domestically and overseas. And, as previously noted, so much of this syndrome stems from European Zionist history.

The Arab world saw the founding of Israel as yet another Western colonial project, which, to be sure, it replicated in various ways. Even before the terrible watershed years of WWII, the influx of Jewish immigration into Palestine had led to strong Arab protest and resistance. Instead of working towards a more just and cooperative accommodation with the Palestinian people since 1948, the Israeli government has got more reactionary and repressive.

Given the Anglo-American trend to neo-fascism after 9/11, a context was set and reinforced in which the aims of the Zionist national security State could predominate. Extremist Jewish elements were free - and even encouraged - to virtually take over the West Bank, establishing their settlements and presence at Palestinian expense.

Crouching Tiger, Rising Dragon

Western extremism was taking root after 9/11, and not only in Rightwing countries like Israel and the US. It was, of course, the global hegemon America which set the tone and

shaped so much of the agenda. Under the Obama Administration, the increasing Social Darwinist competition with both Russia and China came to the fore (“US Army Is Getting Ready For Great Power War [Think Russia or China]”, www.nationalinterest.org, 2/5/16).

“Great power” war is being crazily talked about in a chillingly conventional fashion, so symptomatic of the mad military-industrial complex to which the NZ Establishment is so contentedly connected. Despite our PM’s generally commendable rhetoric recently at the UN, NZ governments – as shown clearly by “SDPS:2018” – have been strengthening ties with the American doomsday machine.

It is very interesting, pertinent, and apposite at this point to quote an Indian Establishment analyst in regard to Russia and China, and the geopolitical competition of these two countries with the US. For India, the potential enemy of most concern is China. Consequently, Dr Subhash Kapila of the South Asia Analysis Group (SAAG), a former diplomat to Japan and the US, warns the US against pushing Russia into a joint alliance with China (“United States & West Confrontation With Russia: Geopolitical Consequences”, *South Asia Analysis*, 3/4/18, <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/node/2281>). Indeed, he chides the US in this regard. The SAAG, incidentally, is an Establishment think tank based in India, consisting of Indian academics and former Government officials.

Dr Kapila says: “Obviously, China is the most potent threat to US national security interests, intent on challenging US global predominance, and endangering the security of US allies in the Indo-Pacific and its strategic partners” (ibid.). In this connection, Kapila asserts that: “China is a revisionist power with aspirations to attain strategic equivalence with the US, and hence the major source of military confrontations with the US. **The US and China are destined for an inevitable military conflict in the coming decades**” [my emphasis] (ibid.). Trump & co. surely seem to be saying “Amen” to this.

A Geopolitical Swinger!?

The Obama Administration had been openly squaring up simultaneously to both Russia and China, but especially Russia, and in a most dangerously aggressive way. Its geopolitical forays into Eastern Europe were unabated. While Obama & co had announced a swing to the Pacific to counter China, they portrayed the immediate enemy as Russia. The election of Hillary Clinton would have immediately plunged the world further into a perilous confrontation in Europe, especially over the Ukraine, as well as in Syria and elsewhere. In this connection, Russia has, indeed, been frank about its concerns and its preference for Donald Trump as American President.

Dr Kapila aptly spells out, from his perspective, the commitment of the so-called “Deep State” to confrontation with Russia. “US President Trump in his first year made wise moves to reset US relations with Russia but was ambushed by the Cold War gladiators on Capitol Hill, who have not yet got over their earlier post-WWII Cold War animosities with Russia” (ibid.).

Given the ongoing charges in the US over cyber media interference by Russia in the 2016 American election, along with all the reaction from the so-called “Deep State”, and consequent criticism of the Trump Administration from former intelligence and military officials, plus other scandals and problems (especially ongoing FBI investigations), just how things will shake down in the longer run remains as yet unclear.

Riling The Russians

While the Deep State, the Democrat Party, and the warmongering media have prompted stupid and rash acts of violence by the Trump Administration in Syria, the great irony is that, with regard to Russia, this Administration wants a more moderate and restrained relationship than the Democrats. And the world may actually breathe a bit freer if Trump and Putin can come to some sort of working deal, despite the opposition to such an arrangement within America itself

Russian President Vladimir Putin himself has posted a warning in no uncertain terms, saying that WWII “**would lead to the end of civilisation’ as he accused America of violating the nuclear balance**” (“Putin Says US Is Spoiling For World War”, *Telegraph Group* report, reproduced in the *Press*, 9/6/18). Putin very validly pointed out the mounting dangers of the arms race. “He said Russia had developed weapons to breach US missile defences after Washington left the Soviet-era anti-ballistic missile treaty in 2002” (ibid.). This egregious dereliction of duty by the US has been portentous and hugely unsettling in its implications. So *much again for the “international rules-based order”!*

President Putin rightly remarked that: “The exit of the US from the missile defence treaty was an attempt to ruin” the balance maintained by the “fear of mutually assured destruction” [MAD] (ibid.). A combination of the deeply endemic “Dr Strangelove” warfighting syndrome embedded in so much of the psychopathological American power elite, as reinforced by the capitalist war industry, had manifested itself in the Reaganist “Star Wars” fantasy.

How To Pre-Empt Peace-Making

These delusions have carried on right up to the present, and are tracking into the future. The human “killer ape” know no bounds, when allowed free rein. Thankfully, and most admirably, President Putin is yet urgently appealing “**for new arms control negotiations**” in the very face of Trumpism (ibid.). At present, Putin is also under the illusion that Russia’s latest weapons developments have preserved the nuclear parity (ibid.). But, of course, the Russian announcement of new super-advanced weaponry (including an “underwater drone” and a “hypersonic glider warhead”) acts in reality as just one more phase in the continuing big power arms race (ibid.). Yet President Putin has, at the same time, very meaningfully extended the hand of peace.

While the media report just cited gave out this highly important infor-

mation, including Putin's quotes, it framed this information as having been presented in terms of "Cold War rhetoric", intended to serve Putin's own domestic interests. Whatever the truth of this particular media angle, any big power proposal for peace-making dialogue should be immediately taken up.

The fact remains that when such overwhelmingly significant issues of life and death are raised for international discussion, and hopefully positive, pre-emptive action, the zombie, brain-dead, Rightwing media present these issues in a deliberately negative fashion designed to forestall any genuine peace-making efforts. Lamentably, this ploy reflects the general self-serving and blindly focused short-term aims of the Western power elite. *Freud's "death instinct" still prevails.*

Growing Confrontation With China

Compared with Russia, China is yet a different kind of challenge for Trump & co. The Administration's general stance is openly belligerent, despite trying for a while to cajole China into a mutual accommodation on nuclear disarmament policy towards North Korea. At the time of writing (September 2018), President Trump has stepped up his trade war on China (e.g., "Trump Launches New Wave Of Anti-China Tariffs", *Press*, 19/9/18).

Trump has, in fact, grossly escalated this trade war in a very dangerously provocative way, imposing punitive tariffs on some \$US250 billion worth of Chinese goods. And he has, at the UN itself, even accused China of trying to interfere in the circus of the American electoral process. Trump's trade wars are, of course, mixed up with a whole raft of economic sanctions imposed for political reasons – on countries from North Korea and Iran, to Venezuela and Russia.

All this economic aggression is emblematic of the militarist market. Aotearoa/NZ is even entangled with trade issues involving both behemoths. On the one hand, it is in dispute with the US over our steel and aluminium exports being subject to tariffs, with the Trump Administra-

tion in militarist market mode even claiming national security resource concerns.

On the other hand, and so very ironically, NZ is caught in an embarrassing dispute with China over – *of all things!* – yes, "Chinese steel exports to NZ" ("Steel Inquiry Risks Chinese Tension, Industry Warns", *Press*, 25/9/18). Almost comically, the High Court has ordered "the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) to reopen its investigation" into the question of "whether anti-dumping tariffs should be applied on galvanised steel imports" (ibid.).

Meanwhile, NZ Forestry Minister Shane Jones praises China for being "'tremendously candid' about the risk of a protracted trade war" between it and the US ("China Up Front On Trade, Says Jones", *Press*, 24/9/18). Ironies abound again! In sharp contrast to the potential threat of China to the "international rules-based order" painted in "SDPS:2018", the Asian giant is now championing this order and the WTO against the ravages of the Trump Administration.

Whatever the particular issues between countries, the over-riding Social Darwinist and geopolitical impetus, given the collective global goal of economic growth, is towards capitalist competition and confrontation across the planet. This is becoming rapidly evident in the Pacific region, or more widely, as the US now likes to define things vis-a-vis China's rise, the Indo-Pacific region.

The Ocean Of Peace?!

Dr Kapila's concerns aside, it certainly seems that, as indicated above, the Trump Administration views China very much as the major emerging enemy. NZ's latest defence strategy posture duly echoes this outlook in its servilely client state style. The relevant document mentions the word "China" 32 times, compared with only seven for "Russia", also portrayed as a rival and potential enemy ("SDPS:2018", op. cit.).

While NZ is naturally oriented to the Pacific rather than the European theatre, Russia was once (back in

the 1980s) the great bogeyman in the Pacific for the US, and client states Australia and NZ (e.g., "Baiting The Bear: Threats To The Soviet Pacific Fleet", *PR* (first series) 9, 1986, <https://www.scribd.com/doc/33723183/Peace-Researcher-Vol1-Issue09-1986>; "Nation-Hero, Nation-Villain: Another Look At The Soviet Threat", Jem Bates, Samizdat, 1984).

The reactionary Reagan Administration cynically and maliciously hyped up the alleged Russian threat while positioning itself in first strike mode, including anti-submarine warfare (ASW), a strategy in which Aotearoa/NZ had been deeply integrated (ibid. "New Zealand's Doomsday Commitment", op. cit.). ASW is indeed NZ's specific combat commitment in the Pentagon's plan for Armageddon.

Compared with Russia, China is clearly a growing power in the Pacific, and around the world today. But, as always, there is plenty of cynically contrived propaganda in American posturing, given the underlying economic, environmental, etc., trends at work in global geopolitics. Moreover, the Trump Administration can even be said to be simply implementing objectives planned well back in the past.

Planning The Militarist Market

As Helen Caldicott pointed out back in 2002, the "ongoing demoniacal representation of North Korea is important to the Pentagon because it has been and is used to justify the only US military deployment on mainland Asia (the US maintains 37,000 troops in South Korea). Adherence to this policy is essential because it gives the US a reason to maintain a military presence and a belligerent policy in an Asian country, **while it is currently positioning itself to cast China as the next major enemy on the horizon** (my emphasis). Recently, Afghanistan has, on an acute basis, replaced China as a major Pentagon focus" ("The New Nuclear Danger", op. cit., p28).

Well, China is on the radar with a vengeance, and even Afghanistan is back. What is worse for the world is that the US has, ever so cleverly,



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succeeded in uniting China and Russia in a de facto front against the West. This was recently signalled by the “biggest war games” held in Russia’s history (“Kremlin Begins Biggest War Games With China”, *Press*, 13/9/18). Russia combined with “more than 3,000 Chinese soldiers in a show of military might intended to counter what it called the ‘aggressive and unfriendly’ attitudes towards it” (ibid.). The Vostok war games may well mark a major geopolitical downturn. Let’s hope not, and do our best for peace-making!

Promoting Positive Alternatives

Most marvellously, back in the 1980s, we succeeded in breaking free from the shackles of the ANZUS defence agreement (comprising the US, Australia, and NZ) with our declaration to be “nuclear free”. But, now again, we are for all intents and purposes locked back again in an ANZUS-type arrangement, as highlighted and illustrated by “SDPS:2018” (again emphasising the relevant quotes cited at the top of my article, e.g., “New Zealand’s Domsday Commitment: Anti-Submarine Warfare”, op. cit.).

PR Co-Editor Murray Horton sets out a programme of positive, alternative action to the NZ government’s current strategy of integration in the American war machine and its march to Armageddon. As Murray

says: “Being nuclear-free is not enough. NZ needs to break the chains that continue to bind us into the US military and intelligence empire” (“Demilitarising The Pacific Starts At Home, Jacinda”, *PR* 55, June 2018, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/pr-backissues/pr55.pdf>).

The NZ Anti-Bases Campaign (ABC) calls for a complete demilitarisation of the Pacific, and so, ideally, the dismantling of all military bases, belonging to whatever country! (ibid.). Now that’s something really grand, transformative, and visionary to get out teeth into for a better world!!

Beyond The Pentagon of Power

The military-industrial complex already had the American people firmly in its grip well before Donald Trump and his paleo-conservative clique came to power. The title of “Commander-in-Chief” attributed to the Presidential office emphasises the extreme degree of this militarisation and its accompanying mind-set. Terms like “Commander-in-Chief” and “leader of the free world” are duly echoed here in Aotearoa/NZ on occasion by the crony corporate media. We must surely join hands more firmly with American activists, and others elsewhere, in contesting domestic racism, class oppression, and foreign policy militarism. □

Reviews

SEE NO EVIL: New Zealand’s Betrayal Of The People Of West Papua

by Maire Leadbeater

Otago University Press, Dunedin, 2018

Reviewed by Jeremy Agar

In 1545 a Spanish ship sailing north of Australia came across a large island which the captain named New Guinea because its inhabitants reminded him of the people he had encountered in Guinea, in west Africa. Five centuries ago people did not know anything much about societies more than a day’s journey away, so the captain’s continentally wide error, based presumably on the colour of the two populations’ skins, need not be assessed as such an assumption would be these days. Medieval people greeted any difference from the familiar with confusion.

The trouble is that in the 21st Century, when the world should know better, nothing much has changed. The people of West Papua, as they refer to themselves, are still misnamed and mistreated. West Papua is now part of Indonesia. The eastern half of the island (which is still usually known as New Guinea) is Papua New Guinea, an independent country that was most recently a colony of Australia.

The Spanish did not come back but loads of others came and went over the years. Early invasions from Germany and cannibals from Malaysia were followed by the Netherlands colonising the west of the island while Britain colonised the east. During World War 2 Japan invaded from the north, only to be met by the Australian Army. After particularly nasty fighting, the Japanese were ejected and the



Australians took over the administration of Papua New Guinea, while after the war the Dutch came back to Indonesia, hoping to resume control of their empire.

When Indonesia was granted independence in 1949 no-one knew what to do about West Papua. Dutch attempts to settle in its mountainous terrain had failed, and only 16,000 non-Papuan Asians lived there. The border between the two New Guinea entities is a straight vertical line that ignores all geography and history. Indonesia is the world's most populous Islamic country; West Papua's people are mostly missionaried Christians or animists – or both at once. Indonesians are ethnically and culturally related to Malays; West Papuans are Melanesian. Logic would include all New Guinea as a single country or as part of a Melanesian federation. A Leftist Indonesian nationalism claimed that all the former Dutch empire should come under its rule. The departing Dutch, with no skin in the game, suggested the United Nations sort out West Papua's future. All this coincided with the US war against Vietnam, so the Americans were keen to befriend nearby Indonesia, especially since an Army takeover in 1965 landed a fiercely anti-Communist dictator in charge. Somewhere between 500,000 and a million suspected Leftists were killed, leading Harold Holt, the then Aussie Prime Minister, to suggest that “[w]ith 500,000 to one million Communist sympathisers knocked

off, I think it is safe to assume a reorientation has taken place”.

The West Has Never Given A Damn About The Place

The reorientation guaranteed West Papuan interests would ever be dismissed, continuing New Guinea's fate as the idle distraction of more powerful foreign forces who have never cared a damn about the place. Maire Leadbeater cares a lot. Her passionate and thorough account looks at New Zealand's connections to the region, which are recent and indirect. NZ might not have invaded or enslaved the locals but, in these pages, it stands accused of turning blind eyes and deaf ears to the malefactors.

NZ did whisper some evil. Walter Nash, Labour PM between 1957 and 1960, said that West Papua should be left to determine its own future, while Frank Corner, the leading NZ diplomat, thought that “surely someone in the Western camp should have something to say about a question which can indeed be seen in moral terms but which can also be seen in political terms - the protection of the rights of a small population in our part of the world...”.

Seeing no evil? Perhaps peeping at it is closer. Foreign Affairs bureaucrats, as has always been the case, grovelled to the expedient and the powerful, while Nash and Corner might well have known that it was safe for little NZ to offer up a few ambiguously sympathetic

remarks as anything said in Wellington would be ignored anyway as the Netherlands, the US and Australia sucked up to Indonesia. A referendum of the people of West Papua would seem to have been not only a unimpeachable – and conventional - right but also a tactic that would allow the overlords an out excuse. They could have shrugged off any result in a place that did not really affect outside powers' interests. It never happened, largely because it might have encouraged all sorts of inferiors to get ideas above their station.

Leadbeater cites an Australian journalist who provided a classic example of the *realpolitik* style when he remarked that “if by some calamitous mischance” West Papua voted to become a separate state it could be seen as a precedent for other self-determination demands “and who wants that?” Yet again, as always, the wellbeing of New Guinea's people was irrelevant.

So, it was that, in 1969 West Papua was incorporated into an Indonesia which made no attempt to respect their new acquisition. Armed resistance had broken out, which Jakarta greeted by importing settlers to dilute Melanesian traits and of course by ruthless force against a militarily feeble insurgency. The dictator Suharto had, you'll recall, come to power by killing up to a million people who were of his own ethnicity and culture.

The governments of New Zealand, Australia - and the rest – knew exactly what to expect when a now entrenched Suharto was faced with resistance from a technologically primitive and socially heterogeneous society, one with which the dictator shared no sympathies, in a part of the world unknown to Western opinion elites. Unaccountable violence was inevitable.

Any Mention Of Independence Deemed Treason

Suharto was overthrown by his own people in 1998. By 2001, with its control secure, the Indonesian government felt able to appear to agree to the suggestion that West Papua be granted a “Special

Autonomy” within a federal constitution. As Indonesia is the world’s largest archipelago, its population both large and diverse, this solution should have recommended itself to all participants. But any mention of independence or any hint of dissent was deemed “treason”.

In 2000, at the Pacific Islands Forum, Nauru included two representatives from West Papua in its delegation and, along with Vanuatu, spoke for West Papuan independence. Leadbeater writes that had NZ supported the initiative, it “would have been a game-changer” as other Pacific states would have followed suit. “Would have been”? Surely that is optimistic. “Could have been”? That, too, is unlikely. The Pacific islands simply do not have the reach or the cultural power to affect matters beyond their shores, and they are not necessarily respected among themselves.

At the 2018 Pacific Islands Forum important member states like Australia and Fiji didn’t even bother to show up. Back in 2000 the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Phil Goff, offered to mediate, and doubtless he would have been an honest broker, but the governments of the United States, Indonesia and Australia would not have allowed him to go anywhere close to satisfying Melanesian hopes.

In 2001 an NZ Embassy staffer in Indonesia conceded that the locals in West Papua wanted independence but “there is no blinking the fact that they would have been badly governed. The intense ethnic rivalries, corruption, and very low level of education and social development would make sure of that...”. His conclusion: a “special autonomy” was indeed the better option. In other words, I wash my hands of these losers and hope that whatever happens on the island stays on the island.

A footnote indicates that this telling detail was released to Leadbeater under the Official Information Act, and it is reasonable to assume that without her decades-long investigations none of us would be any the wiser about the sad history

of New Guinea (though she omits herself from the narrative). One of the very few public figures who does appear – deservedly – is Keith Locke, a former Green MP and Leadbeater’s brother. Is one family the source of virtually all that laypeople know about the sad neglected island whose people might look like Africans?

In accusing NZ of seeing no evil there is the implicit hope that we could have affected the dismal outcome. Is it a consolation to consider that this is improbable? Leadbeater would not agree, but she could take consolation from the fate of Timor Este, whose comparable history she also alerted us to. There, at least, the movement for sovereignty eventually succeeded (*Jeremy’s review of Maire’s 2006 Timor Leste book, “Negligent Neighbour”, is in Peace Researcher 34, July 2007, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/pr-backissues/pr34.pdf>. Ed.*).

IN THE SHADOWS OF THE AMERICAN CENTURY The Rise And Decline Of US Global Power by Alfred W McCoy

Haymarket Books, Chicago, 2017

Reviewed by Murray Horton

I first became aware of Alfred W McCoy’s impressive scholarship and riveting writing (based on life-threatening fieldwork) when I read his 1972 masterpiece “The Politics Of Heroin In Southeast Asia”, which clearly documented the role of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in the opium/heroin trade in the context of the Vietnam War. The book created a global sensation.

Not that it shamed the CIA into stopping its partnership with organised transnational crime – the Agency had had a working relationship with the Mafia going back to World War 2, one which

came to full bloom with regards to Cuba, where they shared common goals (namely to get rid of Fidel Castro by any means, including numerous unsuccessful murder attempts).

I hadn’t read anything else by McCoy in the 46 years since that book. But it made such an impression on me that I was glad of the chance to read this latest one (the first book I’ve ever read electronically). I wasn’t disappointed. McCoy is one of the few American writers to not be squeamish about using the word “empire” in relation to his own country (although I note that it doesn’t feature in the title, which substitutes “global power”).

McCoy’s 1972 book was a forensic expose of the links between US intelligence and organised crime, specifically drugs, as a key component of building and maintaining the American Empire. His 2017 book continues and updates that theme. There is a fascinating chapter entitled “Covert Netherworld”, which looks at several case studies in recent decades, starting with the 1980s’ Iran/*contra* scandal, whereby the Reagan Administration sold missiles to Iran (then, as now, Uncle Sam’s bogeyman) in order to get the money to arm the counter-revolutionary guerrillas (the *contras*) fighting Nicaragua’s Sandinista government, on behalf of the CIA.

That, in turn, required the active (and very profitable) involvement of the various cocaine barons of Central America and the Caribbean. I’d never heard of Alan Hyde, who was a drugs kingpin in that part of the world. He became a key CIA ally. That chapter also examines, in great detail, the role of the politically well-connected opium/heroin barons in America’s seemingly endless war in Afghanistan (which is still going today, including the involvement of minor US satellites such as New Zealand).

Surveillance

Two other fascinating chapters are titled “A Global Surveillance State” and “Torture And The Eclipse Of Empires”. McCoy has long



Dominion Post 16.10.18

result of an institutionalised culture of impunity.

Murder With Impunity

Imperialism and impunity go hand in hand in hand. This is not confined to the US. Let's just take the practice of killing your opponents or critics in other people's countries. Countries that have been guilty of that range from France (the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing in Auckland in the 80s) to Russia, with the attempted murder by nerve agent of a former Russian double agent in the UK in 2018. Both France and Russia are former major imperial Powers that obviously still harbour delusions of grandeur.

specialised in the Philippines (a country which is also of great interest to me). He did extensive fieldwork for his 1972 book in the Philippines of Ferdinand Marcos' dictatorship. That country was an American colony for the first half of the 20th Century, being "pacified" only after horrendous slaughter, and is still in thrall to the US today.

McCoy makes a cogent case that the US treated the Philippines as a "colonial laboratory", which resulted in the world's first surveillance State. This was then further honed in the Vietnam War and also against the American people themselves. It has now grown into the monstrous global surveillance regime that we see manifested in things such as the Five Eyes electronic intelligence spying network, comprising the US, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (which is about the only mention that NZ gets in the book. Our Governments and their media mouthpieces like to trumpet that NZ is a key ally of the US. Let's not kid ourselves. We're useful, in the same way that a doormat is useful).

Torture

The chapter on torture follows the same trail, from the Philippines at the start of the 20th Century to George W Bush's "War on Terror", with the horrors of Guantanamo, rendition, waterboarding, etc., etc. Torture has always been a feature of empires, any empires, and the Americans are no exception. There

are plenty of other examples which could have been cited in this book.

For example, I very recently met my first person of Uruguayan descent. I had studied inter-American relations at university in the 70s and this guy told me I was the first person he'd met in NZ who'd ever heard of Dan Mitrione. Who? He was an American assigned by his Government to work in several South American countries, to teach "advanced counterinsurgency techniques". He was accused of helping to train the torturers – which led to his being kidnapped and murdered by a Uruguayan guerrilla group in 1970.

"In *The Shadows Of the American Century*" was published in 2017, so this is not yet another book about Donald Trump (he's in it but basically as an endnote, which seems appropriate). Barack Obama is the most recent President to be examined by McCoy, who makes clear that this supposedly "liberal" President was up there with the worst of them, using torture and surveillance and whatever else it took to maintain the supremacy of the American Empire.

Indeed, in some respects, Obama was worse than his predecessor George W Bush – Obama authorised more State-sanctioned murders by drone (with all their attendant "collateral damage" i.e. dead and maimed civilians) than any other President. All of this is the

You don't even have to be a major Power to undertake these extra-territorial murders – being a strategic ally of one is sufficient. Israel has murdered people offshore for years (when Mossad agents were arrested and imprisoned for trying to fraudulently obtain New Zealand passports last decade, they wanted them to assist their international travel. Fake passports from "respectable" countries are a standard tool of Mossad death squads).

The current 2018 example is the revolting torture and murder (by being cut to pieces while still alive) of the Saudi journalist inside the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul by a death squad that was flown in to do the job (then flown out very quickly). Of course, both Israel and Saudi Arabia are strategic allies of the US. Likewise, North Korea is a strategic ally of China – so, with impunity, carried out the 2017 murder of Kim Jong-un's half-sibling at Kuala Lumpur Airport (also using a nerve agent, obviously still favoured as the State murder weapon of choice in what used to be called, in the Cold War days, the Second World or the Communist Bloc).

But the US, as still the dominant Empire (albeit on the way down) takes impunity to a whole new level, with its systematic dealing out of death worldwide, both via "surgically precise" (yeah, right) drone strikes or good old-fashioned carpet

bombing. Ask the residents of Mosul in Iraq how they enjoyed being “liberated” from ISIS by US air power. A lot of them didn’t survive to express their gratitude to Uncle Sam.

McCoy’s book contains fascinating details about modern (and future) warfare, in a chapter entitled “Beyond Bayonets And Battleships: The Pentagon’s Wonder Weapons”. The vitally important role of cyber-warfare in crippling your enemy’s military ability (not to mention his whole society) is emphasised. Of course, protecting little old New Zealand from hacks and cyber attacks is given as the prime reason for the existence of the NZ Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB), which operates the Waihopai spy base.

The counter-argument is that there is no good reason why a separate, dedicated, cyber-defence agency couldn’t handle that and that alone – leaving the GCSB exposed for what it is, a junior satellite of the US National Security Agency (NSA), spying on the people of NZ and the world on behalf of the US covert State. The US has enthusiastically adopted cyber-warfare as a weapon, targeting the likes of the Iranian nuclear programme (working in tandem with Israeli intelligence, whose agents did the “wet work” of systematically murdering Iranian nuclear scientists).

The book’s subtitle is “The Rise And Decline Of US Global Power”. The titles of the final two chapters are self-explanatory: “Dynamics Of US Decline” and “Five Scenarios For The End Of the American Century”. The latter looks at scenarios by which China (in partnership with others) can supplant the US, both economically and militarily within the next few decades. Trump responded to the former threat by launching an ever-expanding trade war with China. Militarily, the US is still the dominant global power but China is developing the capacity to nullify that. One of McCoy’s scenarios is World War 111. Another one is the runaway train that is climate change. “Whether by slow erosion or violent eruption, this ongoing shift in the balance of power bears watching. From everything I have learned over the

past 50 years, we can count on one thing: this transition will be transformative, even traumatically so, impacting the lives of almost every American”.

Book Has Some Omissions

I must say there is something depressing about seeing the world in terms of a new empire (China) replacing the old one (US). To me, the central omission from this book is any questioning of why does the world need empires at all? As McCoy graphically illustrates, imperialism throws up a system of governance seemingly inspired by binge watching *Game Of Thrones*.

There are other omissions – McCoy concentrates on the American State, overt and covert. Outside of the gigantic arms manufacturers, there is little to no examination of the American private sector – the huge transnational corporations (TNCs) that dominate the global economy and increasingly set the global economic and political agenda. The likes of Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon (the quartet known as GAFAM) are key players in the American Empire.

Anyone doubting the clout of American Big Business in a small satellite country like NZ need only consider two very recent examples: firstly, the role of Warner Brothers in getting the NZ government to change labour laws to suit the American entertainment giant when making movies here (the “Hobbit Law”). Secondly, and most dramatically, the ability of the US entertainment transnationals to influence the US government to lean on the NZ government to bust Kim Dotcom via an over the top American-style Police raid. His alleged crime (for which he is still resisting extradition)? Copyright violations! Both of those events occurred during the “liberal” Obama Presidency.

On the solely military front, an omission is an examination of the role of mercenaries and transnational private armies to which the US can outsource its wars (to coin a Nixonian phrase familiar to those of mine and McCoy’s vintage, they provide “plausible deniability” to the American Empire/

State). There is no mention of Blackwater, whose “military contractors” wrought such havoc during the American and ludicrously titled “Coalition of the Willing’s” occupation of Iraq. Blackwater has gone now (well, it no longer operates under that name) but its founder has been suggesting to Trump that the American war in Afghanistan should be privatised and turned over to mercenaries. Indeed, mercenaries of a variety of nationalities have been quite the fashion in the last couple of decades, cropping up in countries ranging from Papua New Guinea to Equatorial Guinea, from Syria to the Central African Republic.

Personal Cost Of War & Empire

For me, the chapter with the most impact is the first one, entitled “US Global Power And Me”. This is the book’s first few paragraphs: “Throughout my long life in this country, America has always been at war. Short wars, long wars, world war, Cold War, secret war, surrogate war, war on drugs, war on terror, but always some sort of war. While these wars were usually fought in far-off countries or continents, sparing us the unimaginable terrors of bombing, shelling, and mass evacuation, their reality invariably lurked just beneath the surface of American life”. “For me, they were there in the heavy drinking and dark moods of my father and his friends, combat veterans of World War II; in the defence industries that employed him and most of the men I knew growing up; in the State surveillance that seemed to follow my family; in the bitter anti-war protests that divided the country during my college years; and in the endless war on terror that has stumbled ever onward since 2001”.

“I was born in 1945 at the start of an ‘American Century’ of untrammelled global dominion. For nearly 80 years, the wars fought to defend and extend that vision of world power have shaped the American character - our politics, the priorities of our Government, and the mentality of our people. If Americans aspired to govern the world like ancient Athenians,

inspiring citizens and allies alike with lofty ideals, we acted more like Spartans, steeling our sons for war from childhood and relegating their suffering to oblivion as adults". "Yet it was that Athenian aspiration to dominion that led this country into one war after another. It was that unbending ambition for a global Pax Americana that has allowed war to shape this country's character. At great personal cost for those who fought such wars, this country has won not only a kind of security but unprecedented power and prosperity..." McCoy's father was a veteran of both WW2 and the Korean War. The family paid a heavy price for the personal legacy of war. "Prosperity's glow turned out to have a darker side. My father had suffered more in two wars than we knew. During our first years in Los Angeles (in the 1950s), he drank, gambled, caroused, and racked up debts that nearly bankrupted us. Little more than a year after asking my mother for a divorce and walking out, he died in an alcohol-fuelled accident at the age of 45..."

A Must Read

This book is a must read for those who want to understand the central global fact of the last nearly eight decades, namely the dominance (actual or attempted) of the world by the American Empire. War has always been a central feature of that imperial process. As the above quotes show, war has cast a long shadow over Alfred W McCoy's entire life, both academically and personally. This is a book by someone who has devoted his life to examining the American Empire, in all its unlovely glory. Highly recommended

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Malcolm McKinnon

In Jeremy Agar's review (*Peace Researcher* 55, June 2018, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/pr-backissues/pr55.pdf>), he identifies weaknesses in Stevan and Hugh Eldred-Grigg's "Phoney Wars: New Zealand Society In The Second World War" and overall is unimpressed: "beware of the text.

The history, especially when the story ranges overseas, is untrustworthy". This correspondent thinks it would be a great pity if such a warning led readers of *Peace Researcher* to ignore the book altogether because it has much of great relevance to any peace movement.

First, despite its subtitle, the book could in fact best be described as an anti-war book. On page after page, it impels the reader to ask, "were these deaths justified by the objectives for which the war was being fought?" The authors' answer is more often than not, "No". Second, in writing about World War II the book is applying this approach to the emblematic "good" war and is not convinced of that "good". The book spells out the often-shabby power politics that underpinned wartime strategies and goals.

Yes, Hitler's Nazi Germany (an enemy) was a fascist power but was Stalin's Soviet Union (an ally) any better? Yes, Tojo's Japan (an enemy) was militarist and hyper-nationalist but was the Guomindang regime in China (an ally) any less so? And what about empire? Britain, France and the United States may have been democracies but Britain and France were also the world's largest imperial powers and the United States commanded a comparable sphere of influence in the Americas.

Certainly democracy, self-determination and human rights played little role in the Pacific War, as the nationalist Quit India movement found out in 1942. Third, the book asks whether isolated – and unthreatened, they argue – New Zealand needed to be involved in the war at all. This is not an inherently pacifist argument but the Aotearoa peace movement in more recent times has had isolationist strands and it is illuminating to apply that thinking back in time. In sum, don't dismiss all Jeremy Agar's criticisms but don't also skip the book.

JEREMY AGAR'S REPLY

You start with: "The book could best be described as an anti-war book". I don't see the book as being anti-war

at all. As you say, it isn't an "inherently pacifist argument" the authors are making. I would suggest it is not a pacifist argument at all, and neither is it an anti-war argument. It's saying that NZ joined the wrong side. Pacifism is a moral stand, based a belief about whether people are ever justified in killing each other. The book's stand is that there was nothing in it for NZ to join the Allies, and that we would have been better off to have become subject to a rapacious Japan. I think this is entirely wrong-headed. We would have been raped and pillaged.

The claim that by becoming such a colony we would have avoided violence is naive at best. It was the US that turned the invasion in the Battle of the Coral Sea, south of where the authors stated imperial Japan would not venture. They would have wanted our farms to feed their people. This would have guaranteed US assaults on NZ.

Malcolm mentions Germany and China and the British Empire, etc. I repeat the point I made about the authors' similar digressions. The book should have stuck to its stated focus of looking at NZ policy and not wandered around the world making random moral judgements. It is not always necessary for intellectuals to bend relativism so far that all actors are seen to be equally culpable, especially when the assessments to achieve this end are necessarily highly selective, contentious and distracting. The authors' introductory vow was to eschew moralism and assess history entirely instrumentally. They achieve something very different.

I did not say it explicitly, but I do now: the fight against fascism was both morally and instrumentally necessary. Reversing the book's assumption, I suggest that appeasement was the original sin. Had the Allies been more resolute in the 1930s, when they were vastly superior militarily and economically, the aggressors could have been deterred and the killing could have been prevented entirely. We'll never know. □

CAFCA/ABC ORGANISER ACCOUNT

Financial Report For Year Ended 31 March 2018

- James Ayers, Organiser Account Treasurer

Presented to Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa Annual General Meeting 17th September 2018

	2018	2017
Income		
Pledges	\$23,950.20	\$26,150.20
Donations	\$ 9,267.45	\$12,354.83
Interest	\$ 3,115.82	\$ 1,851.70
Other	—	—
Total Income	\$36,333.47	\$40,356.73
Expenditure		
Contractor	\$41,792.00	\$40,876.00
Internet/Phone	\$ 1,348.01	\$ 1,536.32
Printer	\$ 80.00	\$ 77.00
Other	\$ 81.10	\$ 13.00
Total Expenditure	\$43,301.11	\$42,502.32
Cash Surplus (Deficit)	-\$ 6,967.64	-\$ 2,145.59
Summary		
Opening Funds	\$26,152.19	\$28,297.78
Add surplus (deficit)	-\$ 6,967.64	-\$ 2,145.59
Closing total funds	\$19,184.55	\$26,152.19
<i>Represented by</i>		
Term deposit Kiwibank	\$12,986.29	\$22,187.25
09 Account Westpac	\$ 6,198.26	\$ 3,964.94
Total Organiser Account Funds	\$19,184.55	\$26,152.19

OMEGA CAMPAIGN OF 1968-69

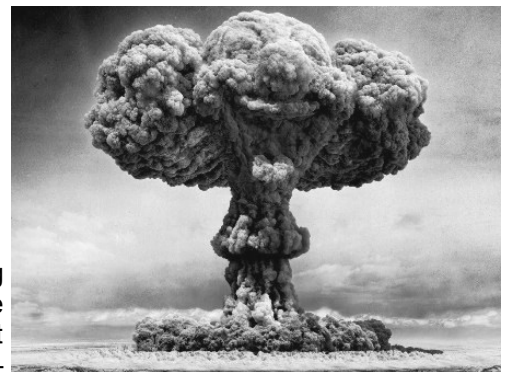
An Important And Well-Earned Victory, Flaws Aside

- Maire Leadbeater

2018 marks the 50th anniversary of the “year of revolution”; mass factory and university occupations in France, the rise of the civil rights movement in the US, and defiant upheavals in Italy, Northern Ireland and Pakistan. And world-wide- rage about the US-led war on the people of Vietnam. New Zealand’s 1968 uprising was the protest action against a proposed US Omega navigation facility with strategic

military and nuclear war-making implications. The high-profile campaign galvanised the student movement and the broad Left – the unions, progressive churches, academics and peace groups.¹

There was a new local target for all the anger and despair people felt about US aggression in Vietnam and the escalating nuclear arms race. Cold War superpower rivalry



seemed to be bringing the world to the brink of disaster: it was around this time that the BBC documentary “The War Game” depicting the horrifying aftermath to a nuclear strike on Britain screened in New Zealand cinemas. For the

campaigners, the proposed station represented a direct consequence of New Zealand's military ties with the US – dealing us into the “war game”

Omega Was Our “1968”.

Our “1968” is a bit of our history well worth celebrating because the proposed Omega transmitter was never built here. So, it was a significant win for the local campaign. When the US proposed to site the station across the Tasman a strong campaign, well supported by Owen Wilkes, Phil Howell and other New Zealanders, forced a decade long delay.

The Australian Government accepted the project in March 1971 but the Omega transmitter did not open for business until 1982. The giant tower, Australia's tallest man-made structure, was built in Gippsland, Victoria and remained there until 2015 although it had been decommissioned as a defence facility in 2008. The decision to demolish was made after an unfortunate base jumper plunged to his death from the tower because his parachute failed to open.²

The public narrative of the New Zealand government of the day was that the protest campaign was irrelevant to the US decision to site the station in Australia. According to Prime Minister Holyoake: “As for the claim of the Omega critics that this agitation led to the selection of Australia rather than New Zealand, you will be familiar with the Aesop fable about the rooster who thought his crowing made the Sun rise”.³

However, Holyoake was being disingenuous; the now declassified Government documents from the time cast a new light on the saga. In April 1969 a US Navy technical team led by Captain MX Polk visited. Polk was an effective and disarming salesperson, and happy to defend his project in a media conference. A few days later, Cabinet agreed “that the United States authorities should be advised that in view of the expenditure likely to be involved New Zealand is unable to offer facilities in New Zealand for the establishment of an Omega station”.⁴

It was decided that no public announcement would be made until after a decision to site the stations in Australia had been announced. The United States was advised and no formal request for New Zealand to host an Omega station was ever made. As I will detail subsequently, the Government played a game of charades with the concerned public for the next two years.

Omega: Important Navigation Aid In Pre-GPS Times

Omega was a world-wide system of navigation which relied on Very Low Frequency (VLF) radio waves, which have the advantage of being minimally attenuated by the ionosphere. The narrow band hyperbolic transmissions thus remain stable many thousands of kilometres from the source. The Omega system required receivers to be located strategically around the globe, each one of which transmitted sequentially. Ultimately eight Omega transmitters were established: in Argentina, Liberia, Norway, La Reunion Island, Japan, Australia, North Dakota and Hawaii. One was also briefly sited in Trinidad.

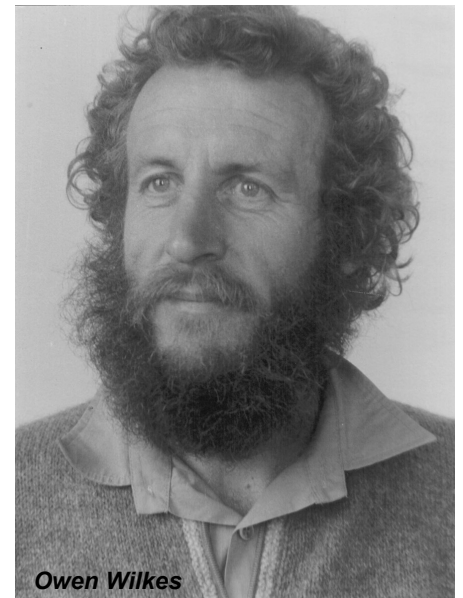
The debate in New Zealand was sparked by a June 1968 article in the Christchurch *Press* stating that the US Navy planned to build an Omega transmitter in the mountains of the South Island. US naval experts favoured a mountainous site because at the time the favoured way of setting up the transmitter antenna was to string it across a valley from high points on either side. According to the *Press* report, US experts had already inspected three sites in the Lake Sumner and Lake Pearson areas and the Omarama district of North Otago.

A Special Emergency edition of the University of Canterbury student paper *Canta* came out less than two weeks later and it spread throughout the country with a record total sale of 72,000 copies.⁵ *Canta* told its readers that an Omega station was set to be an essential submarine navigation aid and would therefore make us a key nuclear target if war broke out. On 28 June when 4,000 people marched

through Christchurch it was the largest anti-war demonstration the city had seen. In Wellington trade unions demonstrated at the opening of Parliament.

Omega Made Owen Wilkes' Name

After a solid ten days doing preliminary research in the Library,



Owen Wilkes sent away requests to obtain US Government Research and Development reports, one of which specifically described how Omega was compatible with and enhanced the performance of navigation aids already installed in missile submarines.

The controversy was unusually high level and technical and leading academics and intellectuals played strong roles in teach-ins and debates. University physicists were prominent up and down the country: RJ Offen at Otago, RM Gould at Victoria and Geoff Austin, Don Hutton and Phil Howell at Canterbury. Phil Howell, a radio engineer, wrote copiously for activist publications, newspapers and other journals.

His writing combined analysis and technical information with a passionate emphasis on New Zealand's right to maintain its sovereignty. In an article for the *New Zealand Methodist* he ended with the tongue-in-cheek suggestion that there be a referendum and if sufficient people wanted to shelter

under the US nuclear umbrella then, perhaps, we should become like Hawai'i, an overseas state of the Union. That way we would at least have voting rights and representation rather than being an "expendable portion of the United States military empire..."⁶ Activists drew heavily on this technical research and expertise in their articles and lobbying.

In August 1968 the Royal Society presented the report that Government had commissioned and pro and anti-Omega forces drew different conclusions from its rather bland findings. The report said that the Omega transmitter would be of no direct use to New Zealand for coastal shipping as a station is unusable within about a 1,000-kilometre range. But External Affairs officials sent out a background "not for attribution" paper to media outlets emphasising the Royal Society conclusion that Omega should be "useful" as a long-range system because of New Zealand's isolation.⁷

Omega was a military project led initially by the US Navy, and the debate in New Zealand focussed on the likely application of the new technology. The scientists judged that all the evidence, including that from electronics journals and other US publications, pointed to Omega being commissioned to meet the needs of ballistic missile submarines. US spokespeople insisted that Polaris submarines would not be fitted with Omega receivers and New Zealand spokespeople assured the public that Omega was not accurate enough for missile launching.

In 1982 Owen Wilkes, key contributor to the 1968 campaign, returned home to New Zealand after working at the prestigious Stockholm Institute for Peace Research (SIPRI) and the Oslo Peace Research Institute (PRIO). He had continued to research navigation aids, including Omega, and he said he had got it wrong – Omega was not used for ballistic missile submarine navigation.⁸

In 1987 Owen and his Norwegian peace research colleague, Nils Petter Gleditsch, published a

scholarly tome about radio navigation aids Loran-C and Omega which details the uses for Omega – not for ballistic missile submarines but for a wide range of other roles in US counterforce strategy, including hunter-killer submarines.⁹ The key driver of the project seems to have been the need to coordinate anti-submarine warfare – for hunter-killer submarines to work in coordination with Orion long range aircrafts, anti-submarine helicopters and ships. This would be facilitated if all used the Omega system.

Desmond Ball, prominent Australian defence strategist, said of the hunter-killers that target Soviet submarines that they have "a counterforce capability essentially similar to that of ICBMs (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles) ..." and because they threaten Soviet second-strike capability "they are inimical to stable deterrence".¹⁰

So, the protestors were right and wrong at the same time. Right that Omega was planned as a key element of US nuclear strategy, but wrong about the ballistic missiles' submarines. Instead, these vessels used a combination of inertial guidance and the global low frequency radio navigation aid Loran-C.

The explanation for this error is complex – it is likely that Omega was considered for ballistic missile submarines until 1966 and authoritative technical literature including defence publisher Jane's supported this scenario based on Omega's underwater reception capabilities. With the benefit of hindsight, Wilkes and Gleditsch suggest there should have been a stronger research focus on the Loran-C navigation system.

Submarines carry an inertial navigation system which measures the vessel's motion from a fixed starting point using a gyroscopic system. Inertial guidance systems need to be realigned with a surface-dependent navigational system. These days the satellite-based Global Positioning System (GPS) has made radio systems such as Omega and Loran-C redundant. The Omega navigation system shut

down in 1997, although the Gippsland tower continued to be used for some years after that as a uni-directional communicator to submarines.

The Game Of Charades

Captain Polk referred to a likely cost to New Zealand of the construction as being somewhat less than \$2 million. Owen Wilkes' research in US journals suggested a figure of \$1.6 million (roughly equivalent to \$28 million today) for the capital cost and \$300,000 a year running costs. Quite an ask for no clear gain to the host country; Omega was not going to be useful for New Zealand shipping because of the "near zone effect" and the Omega transmissions would have a negative impact on important local research projects concerned with very low frequencies.

However, the level of protest was certainly the reason for not announcing the decision. George Laking, Secretary of External Affairs, recommended to the Prime Minister that the US Ambassador be advised that we would not announce the decision because "it would imply that the agitation against a station on grounds of opposition to nuclear involvement with the United States had had an impact".¹¹ Similar messages were passed on to Canberra. I have been able to find no hint of how the US reacted to this news, but it does not see that they challenged their junior ally. George Laking cabled this advice to his colleague Frank Corner in Washington:

"It will clearly be of considerable importance in the context of US/NZ relations that the Government's position is not repeat not misrepresented. It will be necessary to ensure that there is no repeat no suggestion that the Government has bowed to the illogical agitation that the United States proposal has caused in New Zealand".

"The Prime Minister has agreed that no repeat no indication of the Government's position should be given until the United States authorities indicate that an Australian site has been selected There is presumably a possibility

that the Americans may be able to make more specific and more favourable financial offers if they wish for other reasons to have the station in New Zealand but the Prime Minister gave no repeat no encouragement of this possibility".¹²

In 1976 a PRIO publication by Albert Langer (with Owen Wilkes and Nils Petter Gleditsch) revealed that the US Navy had settled on using an Australian site as early as May 1969. A contract for the transmitter and equipment was let at that time with Litton Industries, Littcom Systems.¹³ Subsequently, technical advances made it possible to build the Omega antenna as a tower rather than a valley span,¹⁴ but whether this development was prompted by a lack of suitable remote valley sites in Australia is hard to judge.

While this clandestine "don't ask, don't tell" situation persisted, the debate and campaign went on unabated. Nicholas Turner, a Rightwing journalist with unusually friendly connections to key figures in the Department of External Affairs and to the Prime Minister, wrote a long critique of the movement and its "misuse" of source material during the controversy.¹⁵ Turner did find errors in quotes, but went on to make a few misquotes himself. Predictably, this notched up the rhetoric from the anti-Omega proponents, who were aware of Turner's pro US views on the Vietnam War.

Cock magazine called him a "scurrilous conniving, petulant intelligent deceitful and arrogant CIA/Ky pimp".¹⁶ (Apparently, Turner was present in the entourage of South Vietnamese leader Air Vice Marshal Ky, when Ky visited New Zealand in 1967. In later life Turner viewed the Vietnam War as having helped to stem the tide of Communism in South East Asia, and to that extent it could be claimed as a victory for the US – although they "stayed too long"¹⁷). However, it seems that even Nicholas Turner was not told of the 1969 Cabinet decision. In 1972 he was writing pro-Omega articles for the Australian media from his base in South Vietnam. He enquired in 1972 whether New Zealand ever

"indicated to the United States authorities that it did not wish to have a station built in New Zealand?"¹⁸ Prime Minister Holyoake answered indirectly saying that New Zealand never received a request but the "likely cost was certainly very much a factor in our minds at the time and the Omega Project Office was made well aware of this, but as you know there were other aspects such as the effect on scientific research."¹⁹ Sir Keith Holyoake commented that he looked forward to meeting Turner and his wife on their imminent return to Wellington from South Vietnam.

Anti-Omega campaigners were aware of Turner's connections to Ministry officials. Phil Howell described him in a letter to the *Christchurch Star* as an: "exegetist for the Royal Society, 'fall-guy' for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Devil's advocate for a gratuitous foreign military installation on New Zealand's soil..."²⁰ For their part, officials were not averse to a little digging about their opponents. One memo is headed "Omega: Personalities In The Dispute" and it records the comments of US diplomat Roger Schrader who had met with two US expatriates living in Dunedin, both vocal critics of US foreign policy and one of them a leader in the anti-Omega campaign. Written comments on the bottom of the report ask "would Security Service be interested?" The response was "Suggest not".²¹ An amusing interchange yes, but a reminder also, that for a Government tied into military alliances with the US, anti-war activism poses a real threat, one against which it will use secrecy, subterfuge and even surveillance.

Tremendous Boost to 70s' Anti-Bases Campaign

The Omega campaign stopped the construction of the facility in New Zealand and significantly delayed its construction in Australia. It gave a tremendous boost to the strong anti-base campaigns of the early 1970s: against Project Longbank at RNZAF Base Woodbourne, Blenheim (nuclear test scorekeeper), the Mount John Observatory, near Tekapo, Mackenzie Country (supplying data to the US

Aerospace Defense System) and the campaign for the demilitarisation of Harewood (Christchurch Airport). As a final comment I was dismayed to see documents relating to the early 1980s' discussion about installing an Omega monitor in the Gracefield laboratory of the former DSIR (Department of Scientific and Industrial Research). It was said to be one of more than 40 in various countries used to collect data to improve the system. A 1983 press clipping from the *Evening Post* affirms that the monitor was installed.²² I don't know of any protest about this - by this time, no doubt, most anti-war activists were focussing on US nuclear warship visits. □

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Endnotes

- 1: Omega Action Committee, CND, International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Dunedin Voice of Women, Peace Committee of the Society of Friends, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom – and many others.
- 2: "Australia's tallest man-made structure, the Omega tower, demolished in Gippsland", 22/4/15. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-04-22/omega-tower-australias-tallest-man-made-structure-demolished/6412100>
- 3: Letter from PM Keith Holyoake to Nicholas Turner, 22/8/72. National Archives: (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade) 35/11/2/6 Part 5A "New Zealand Affairs-Economic Affairs-Scientific Liaison with other countries-USA: Omega Navigation System".
- 4: National Archives (Treasury) 52/1010 Pt 1 'Omega Navigation System'.
- 5: See Owen Wilkes, "Protest; Demonstrations Against The American Military Presence In New Zealand: Omega 1968, Woodbourne 1971, Mount John 1972, Harewood/Weedons 1973 (Wellington: A Taylor, 1973).
- 6: *New Zealand Methodist*, 5/11/70.
- 7: Owen Wilkes, Nils Petter Gleditsch, and Ingvar Botnen, "Loran-C And Omega : A Study Of The Military Importance Of Radio Navigation Aids" (Oslo: Norwegian University Press; Oxford: Oxford University Press [distributor], 1987). p. 233-34.

8: *Press*, 2/9/82.

9: Wilkes, Gleditsch, and Botnen, "Loran-C And Omega : A Study Of The Military Importance Of Radio Navigation Aids".

10: Quoted in *ibid*.p.156.

11: Memo George Laking to Prime Minister, 24/4/69 35/11/2/6 Part 5A.

12: Memo from George Laking to Frank Corner, 24/4/69, 35/11/2/6 Part 5A.

13: Albert Langer with Owen Wilkes and Nils Petter Gleditsch. "The Military Functions Of Omega And Loran C", PRIO publication 11-19, 2nd printing May 1976, p. 254

14: New Zealand officials were aware of this tower development in December 1970. (Memo from Secretary of Foreign Affairs, 15/12/70, marked for Australian and New Zealand eyes only. 35/11/2/6 Part 5A)

15: Nicholas Turner. "Omega: A Brief Inquiry Into The Misuse Of Source Material In The Omega Controversy", Wellington, 1969.

16: Albert Langer with Owen Wilkes and Nils Petter Gleditsch. "The Military Functions Of Omega And Loran C", PRIO publication 11-19, 2nd printing May 1976, p.253.

17: "War Stories: Vietnam Journalists Share Examples Of Courage" <https://www.stripes.com/news/special-reports/vietnam-stories/1967/war-stories-vietnam-war-journalists-share-examples-of-courage-1.495465>

18: Letter from Nicholas Turner to Sir Keith Holyoake, 31/7/72. National Archives: 35/11/2/6 Part 5A.

19: Letter from PM Keith Holyoake to Nicholas Turner, 22/8/72. National Archives: 35/11/2/6 Part 5A

20: *Christchurch Star*, 22/9/70.

21: Note for File, "Omega: Personalities In The Dispute", 17/6/69. 35/11/2/6 Part 5A

22: *Evening Post*, 4/3/83.

Lessons From Australia's Bloodless Coup

Peace Researcher at the time certainly grasped its significance. For a very detailed analysis I refer you to issue 19 (first series), June 1988, "Winston Peters: The Great White Hope", by Nuclear Free Kiwis, online at <https://www.scribd.com/document/33725401/Peace-Researcher-Vol1-Issue19-June-1988> (Nuclear Free Kiwis comprised Warren Thomson, Dennis Small and the late Bob Leonard; all three of them having been Editors of, and writers for, *Peace Researcher* over many decades). I most recently wrote about it in *Foreign Control Watchdog* 138, April 2015, in my obituary of Gough Whitlam, who was Australia's 1972-75 Labor Prime Minister, before being overthrown in a bloodless constitutional coup:

"There were, and are, lessons in Whitlam's overthrow for New Zealand. The US covert State tried to repeat the same modus operandi a decade later to get rid of the nuclear free Lange government. As I wrote in my obituary of David Lange (*Watchdog* 110, December 2005, <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/10/09.htm>): "The US tried to subvert and overthrow Lange using all the old tricks in the handbook of its Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). There was the textbook Maori Loans Affair, which targeted Koro Wetere, the Minister of Maori Affairs, and which TVNZ, in one of its finest hours, tracked back to the CIA office in Hawaii. It was a deadringer re-run of the Loans Affair scam which played such a major role in overthrowing the Australian Labor government headed by Gough Whitlam in 1975".

"It didn't work in NZ but then, why would the US want to overthrow the Government that, via Rogernomics, threw this country open to the depredations of American transnational corporations and carpet bombed the economy and society to make it easy pickings for Big Business?" I refer you to my 2005 obituary of

Lange, cited above, for an overview of that 1984-90 Labour government, looking at both Rogernomics and the nuclear free aspect.

So, that establishes the context of the shonky "loans affairs" used first, and successfully, against an Australian Labor government in the 70s and then, unsuccessfully, against an NZ Labour government in the 80s. The similarities of the operations in each country were striking – I refer you to my article in *Watchdog* 56, June 1987, titled, appropriately enough, "Similarities In The Australian And New Zealand Loan Affairs" (<https://www.scribd.com/doc/23706989/campaign-Against-Foreign-Control-of-Aotearoa>). My primary source was a book by Denis Freney, titled "Get Gough! The CIA, Organised Crime And Arms Dealers In The Loans Affair".

In brief, both involved dubious international "financiers" (i.e. con men) with US intelligence connections offering huge (imaginary) overseas loans from outside conventional borrowing channels. Both targeted key Ministers in sensitive portfolios and offered big money for laudable aims – in the case of Whitlam's Ministers, Jim Cairns and Rex Connors, it was to "buy back the farm" i.e. claw back Australian resources from transnational corporations, specifically mining companies.

In the case of Koro Wetere and Tamati Reedy, the head of the Maori Affairs Department, it was to advance Maori aspirations. It nearly worked in NZ- Wetere offered his resignation as Minister but Lange and the Cabinet declined to accept it. The scandal did not bring down either Wetere or the Government but it played a vital role in weakening it, dividing it, and cultivating an appearance of Government incompetence which was seized upon by the National Opposition and the corporate media. For these political sting operations to work, a key ingredient is the active involvement of local Rightwing attack dog politicians. In the Aus-

LEST WE FORGET The Maori Loans Affair

- Murray Horton

Koro Wetere died in June 2018. He had been Minister of Maori Affairs in that 1984-90 Rogernomics/nuclear free Labour government which cast a shadow that still hangs over us all in Aotearoa. His mainstream media obituaries dwell on his noteworthy achievements in things such as advancement of the Maori language and legally empowering the Treaty of Waitangi Tribunal to hear claims dating back to 1840. Very few mentioned the Maori Loans Affair or, if they did, failed to explain its significance.

tralian case, it was the then Queensland Premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen (New Zealand's greatest gift to our Australian brethren). In the New Zealand case it was none other than National MP, Winston Peters. Yes, the same avuncular old elder statesman who put the present Labour government into power, and is the current Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs (not to mention having been Acting PM for six weeks in 2018 while Jacinda was on maternity leave).

"It was, as best I recall, 1987 and I was sitting with Winston Peters in the garden bar of a hotel on Waikiki Beach, enjoying a drink in the colourful sunset. A beautiful, young native Hawaiian waitress stared at Peters as he wandered back into the hotel. 'Who is that man?' she asked curiously. 'Is he your president?' 'Not yet', I replied, "but he'd like to be'. It was still the first term of the Lange Government and Peters was an Opposition National Party MP on the way up. He had captured public attention with a series of hard-hitting attacks on the Government, backed by leaked documents and information received from 'sources' on a variety of juicy issues".

"I had come to Hawaii to investigate his biggest scoop, the Maori Loans Affair. He had unearthed a proposed \$300 million* loan from some deeply dubious financiers, negotiated by the Department of Maori Affairs with the aim of using the cash to fund Maori businesses. The loan was unauthorised, as only the Minister of Finance had the power to sign off a foreign loan deal and, in any case, had never gone through. However, the whiff of fraud was enough to land Maori Affairs head

Tamati Reedy, Maori Affairs Minister Koro Wetere and the Labour Government in deep trouble". *According to Wikipedia, the proposed "loan" was for \$NZ600 million. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C4%81ori_loan_affair. MH. "Peters was in Honolulu to dig up more dirt, as were TV1 news reporter Ric Salizzo and I. Peters claimed to have further evidence, never produced, that the Lange Cabinet had prior knowledge of the deal, and he called upon Labour to resign. We plugged away for a week and discovered he was partly right. The man who was sourcing the loan was a con artist".

"However, we also discovered several of the key figures involved in the deal were clearly linked to the CIA and Office of Naval Intelligence. A private detective, a former Federal Bureau of Investigation agent, handed us files that showed some had been involved in a previous court case in the US and the CIA had blocked evidence in court on the grounds of 'national security'. The Maori Loans Affair bore a startling resemblance to the Australia Loans Affair a decade before, when CIA-linked con men ran a similar scam on the Whitlam Labor Government and helped bring it down".

"In light of the ferocious US reaction to the Lange Government's anti-nuclear stand, it bore all the hallmarks of a botched US intelligence operation designed to discredit the rebellious Lange Government. I know Peters gained much of his information from a man subsequently identified as the head of the CIA headquarters in Hawaii, who was operating under a commercial cover as a businessman. Today, much of this story looks like some weird

John Le Carré novel. But these were still the days of the Cold War, the hardline Reagan era, and small Third World nations that stood in the way of US defence interests had suffered far greater interference and punishment".

"Peters stubbornly refused to listen to any of the information regarding US intelligence links to the affair; it did not suit him to do so because he had enough material to embarrass the Labour Government. He did so very effectively, forcing the closure of the Department of Maori Affairs and blighting the careers of several New Zealand businessmen, public servants and politicians in the process" (NZ Listener, 13/9/08, "Scandalmonger", Bill Ralston, <https://www.noted.co.nz/life/life-in-nz/scandalmonger/>).

Regime Change Is A Constant

This all happened 30+ years ago but there are lessons for today's New Zealand. One is that regime change, whether of friend or foe, has always been part of the repertoire of dirty tricks employed by the US covert State. The only difference is that regime change as applied to foes e.g. Saddam Hussein's Iraq, involves industrial doses of death and destruction (not to mention consequences, seen and unforeseen, that unfold over decades). Whereas regime change as applied to "friends" e.g. Gough Whitlam's Australia (or David Lange's NZ), can be done bloodlessly.

Not that the US has anything to fear from its NZ friend. True, that 1984-90 Labour government did make NZ nuclear free. But Labour in Government has never done anything about Waihopai or Five Eyes or any

PEACE RESEARCHER WELCOMES YOUR FEEDBACK

Peace Researcher is published by the Anti-Bases Campaign. The Co-Editors are Murray Horton and Warren Thomson; the layout editor is (for this issue) Leigh Cookson. It covers a range of peace issues with emphasis on foreign military bases and intelligence topics. Contributed articles will be considered for publication based on subject matter and space requirements. We are particularly interested in reports of original research on peace topics in Aotearoa and the wider region of Australasia and the Pacific. We welcome your feedback and constructive suggestions on how we can improve.

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of the other overt or covert ties that bind NZ to the American Empire. The Ardern government is as servile as the rest of its predecessors. If not more so.

The second lesson is that Winston Peters, the common denominator between that 80s' Labour government and the present one, is, and always has been, a loyal and faithful servant of the American Empire. Here's a quote from my article "Not Very Great Expectations At All", in PR 54 (November 2017, <http://www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr/pr-backissues/pr54.pdf>):

"As for Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Winston Peters - he already held the latter portfolio from 2005-08 under the last Labour government. So, we've already seen enough of him in action in that capacity to have absolutely negative expectations. Filipinos have just the word for him - AmBoy (America's Boy, which they use to describe various of their Presidents and political leaders. There is never any shortage of them in that country)".

"Upon being appointed by Ardern, he said that he had devoted his previous stint at Foreign Affairs to rebuilding NZ's relationship with the US. TV news illustrated this with a clip of him shaking hands with Condoleezza Rice, who was Secretary of State under President George W Bush. We tend to forget that, until Trump came along and lowered the bar to a whole new level, Dubya Bush was viewed as the absolute

nadir of US Presidential ignorance, idiocy and warmongering (now he's wheeled out for public appearances as a kindly old elder statesman)". "Bush gave the world the ongoing and seemingly never-ending wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, both of which have sucked in New Zealand as one of the minor accomplices in crime. We still have troops in both wars (I'm sorry, 'trainers'. I cut my teeth on the Vietnam War - in the early days, the US military presence was described as consisting of 'advisers'. Today they would be called 'consultants'). Bush gave the world the endless and global 'war on terror'. This was the Administration with which Peters was proudly 'rebuilding the relationship'".

"Don't just take our word for it. Here's a quote from a 2005 US Embassy cable (one of those leaked by Wikileaks and online at the Anti-Bases Campaign site at <http://liberation.typepad.com/files/wellington-us-embassy-cables---bryce-edwards.pdf>. They're well worth reading, all 600+ pages of them). 'We believe that Peters is genuinely interested in improving bilateral relations with the United States, and during his introductory meeting with Ambassador McCormick last week he made clear this was a priority. (FYI: Peters purposefully made sure that Ambassador McCormick was the first Ambassador he met with as Foreign Minister)". So, Winston should fit in just fine with Trump's America...". When Peters and New Zealand First were dumped out of Parliament in 2008 (when National replaced Labour as

Government), Winston had been embroiled in scandals involving very large sums from rich donors, most prominently that from expatriate Kiwi businessman Owen Glenn. I wrote, in my analysis of that 2008 election ("Heeere's Johnny!", *Watchdog* 119, February 2009, <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/19/02.htm>): "There have been suggestions that billionaire Owen Glenn was the modern day equivalent of the shonky 'financiers' used to get rid of the Whitlam Labor government in Australia in the 1970s and to very nearly get rid of the Lange Labour government here in the 80s (remember the Maori Loans scandal, which was traced back to the US Central Intelligence Agency?)".

"But I reject that comparison. Why would the CIA want to get rid of a Minister of Foreign Affairs who made it his central policy to suck up to the Bush regime? And why would the US want to destabilise a Government which proved itself such a valuable ally in so many ways? Nope, Winston was finally undone by his own glaring contradictions, both personal and political". It would have been richly ironic if Peters had been dethroned by the very same covert tactic in which he had played a key part in the attempt to bring down the 80s Labour government. And, of course, Peters and New Zealand First came back into Parliament at the 2011 election. The rest, as they say, is history. As far as the American Empire is concerned, Peters has always been a very safe pair of hands. ☐

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